HOW TO SYSTEMATIZE THE DAY'S WORK

87 PLANS AND SHORT CUTS USED AND PROVED AT THE DESKS OF 43 EXECUTIVES

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HOW TO SYSTEMATIZE THE DAY'S WORK

HOW TO SYSTEMATIZE YOURSELF AND YOUR BUSINESS—HOW TO MANAGE TODAY'S WORK AND PLAN TOMORROW'S—HOW TO HANDLE ROUTINE AND CORRESPONDENCE—HOW TO SAVE TIME AND MULTIPLY RESULTS

NINTH REVISED EDITION

THE SYSTEM COMPANY
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SYSTEM "HOW-BOOKS"

How to Increase Your Sales
How to Systematize the Day's Work
How to Get More Out of Your Factory
How to Increase the Sales of the Store
How to Increase a Bank's Deposits
How to Sell Real Estate at a Profit
How to Sell More Fire Insurance
How to Sell More Life Insurance
How to Write Letters that Win

Others in Preparation

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Part I

THE BASIS OF PERSONAL SYSTEM

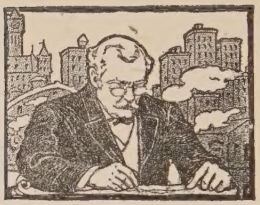
Make Yourself

SYSTEM is a living being. Its home is your business office—your workshop—your factory—your store; even your desk. It lives on your work—devours your detail.

Your system is your creature. You fashion it yourself. You may make it do the very things you want it to do—or you may let it grow rank and suffocate your business. You alone can make it a good system or a bad system.

Your system should be your junior partner. If sickness keeps you at home, you need not worry, provided your system prevails in the business.

System is your second self—the self which works while you play; which catches the reins when you retire. Be studious of system if you would be sure of yourself.



CHAPTER I

System in the Man

IT DOES not need a million dollar responsibility and a $10,000 job to develop a good executive. Clerk or accountant, and even office boy, if he has the care of a desk and its contents, have just as good an opportunity to ground themselves in the principles of system and management as the high-salaried department head, if they are as ready to take advantage of it.

System means simply the ability to get the thing done; to get it done thoroughly, and to get it done on time. It does not mean cards and blanks, red tape and fol-de-rol; it means doing the task nearest at hand; doing it in season; and doing it in full. If a man puts this trinity of effort into every task that comes up, day after day, year in and year out, it matters not whether he makes out bills on a bookkeeper's stool or general orders at the director's table, system will develop in thought and act. Directors of great works are first masters of themselves, their desks, their every effort.

The Most Lowly Desk May be Made a Training Table for System

No matter how lowly and unimportant the desk, it can be made to provide a complete training course in system

and organization, if its owner cares to make it so. Recently, in an article on personal routine, a director of a large Ohio corporation makes this shrewd observation: "It is not only unnecessary to wait for larger opportunities than your desk provides—it is unwise. You may never get the larger opportunities, and even if you do, they may come too late. You may find that you were not sufficiently grounded in the rudiments of system as presented in your everyday, individual work, to make you truly fit to master the higher and more intricate branches."

The clerk who keeps an orderly desk uses much the same sort of ingenuity and method used by the manager who keeps an orderly business. When the clerk keeps his desk free of chaos, dead wood and red tape; when he handles a multiplicity of detail with methodical precision and dispatch; when he completes each task and proves its accuracy before passing it on to someone else; when he checks up each day's work at night and satisfies himself that he has overlooked no promise and forgotten no task; when he makes these things an unchanging part of his day's routine, and does them with the unfailing certainty of a machine, week in and week out—he is training himself in the very basic principles of business organization—training himself in capacities that will enable him to handle with ease the heavier tasks that will come with promotion later on.

Self-Made System and What It Does Toward Success

The systematic office man is like any other flesh and blood success; he is not born with his equipment full-fledged and ready-made; he either makes it himself, or

has it made for him. In the latter case, he gets his system from a fatherly department head, who takes him under his wing, and schools and coaches him in systematic precepts until "the pupil learns by rote the methods of the master."

But most systematic men—and the best of them—make themselves—and the system in these men is real, enduring and ingrained. The self-made system man invents his own system and invents it because he finds it necessary. He has to discover a way to keep ahead of the other fellow and in devising such a way, he cultivates not only system, but his initiative and originality.

The self-made system man accepts and uses system early in his career, because he discovers that it is the easiest way "to get the thing done." He finds that orderliness, promptness and a positive hatred of the excuse, "I forgot," are just as necessary as hard work; that the clever lazy man may outclass the most conscientious plodder who does not pause to plan; in fact that the hardest task can be made the easiest if he applies a little system and ingenuity to it.

The systematic habit starts with system in the little things. The general manager with the seemingly exhaustless capacity for detail may have started as the clever order clerk, who found that he could make out three times as many orders in a day, by using a triplicate order system instead of copying each order over three times. Again, perhaps he began as the ambitious correspondent who used the "form paragraph" system and by judicious use of these forms, answered twice as many letters as the higher salaried correspondent who dictated every letter in full. Or he may even have commenced as the office boy who made short cuts in his desk clean-

ing, or in his keeping of office supplies, so he could ask for something else to keep him busy.

When Opportunity Knocks, the Systematic Man Has His Hand on the Door Knob

The success of system in these minor things inevitably creates more system in larger ones. At his own desk, within his own affairs, the desk man finds the schooling that eventually makes the systematic course of action the obvious course in every problem he undertakes. When promotion comes, he does not have to organize and train himself to fill it; he is an organized man when the big opportunity calls him; and his business or department becomes well organized in turn, because he knows no other way to direct his affairs so easily and profitably.

All this is true and commonplace enough to all experienced office men. Yet how many employers have ever made any definite, persistent effort to school their clerks and assistants in method and organization? An employer will eagerly and gladly pay thousands of dollars to have a corps of system specialists come into his business and put system into his books and his records,—but who can name an employer who ever spent this money to put system into his Men?

If any employer ever did make this expenditure he wouldn't find it necessary to call in experts to fix up his books, or to doctor his methods, for few businesses manned by trained, systematic, methodical men inside ever need "fixing" by outside specialists.

In most houses it is thought fully enough to send around stereotyped and moss-covered mottoes, and to decorate the office walls with time-worn platitudes on "Doing It Right" and "Doing It Now," etc.—but seldom

are there any definite system-plans and short-cuts given to the desk man to facilitate his routine and increase his capacity.

Develop the Human Machine and the Metal Will Shape Itself

In some businesses, a department of $5,000 experts and inventors is maintained solely to study ways and means of increasing the output of the factory machines. If some shrewd manager would devote a mere fraction of this expenditure to studying ways and means to increase the output of his human machines, he might easily reap more dividends than the worth of his whole machinery equipment.

The arrival of a corps of business experts and the installation of new machinery often arouse animosity among employees, for they fear that their jobs are thus jeopardized. Rather than have all of the attention devoted to the machinery of the plant, the men would prefer that some notice be given to them. Any one of them would be gratified to be shown a way to do his work easier and better. For while we are all more or less lazy, we take pride in work well done. Regardless of the development of the machines of the future, the man behind them will continue to remain the vital factor in production.

Toward him, therefore, the employer must bend his energy. He must make him systematic, for that is the basis of profit-making productivity.

A course of instruction in desk system can accomplish three definite and vital results. It can increase the capacity of each desk and thereby reduce the number of employees needed for any given piece of labor. It can

increase the quality and accuracy of the work turned out. And lastly, it can train up and develop more valuable men for the future.

But it cannot be done by platitudes or maxims,—by passing around "copy-book" instructions and "Do It Now" mottoes. It means a careful analysis of the exact classes of work handled by all employees, and actual specific schemes and short cuts worked out to expedite and accomplish this work, in the least time, with the best results.

Dividends on Mistakes

A MISTAKE may be made the keystone of system—the foundation of success. The secret is simple: Don't make the same mistake twice.

The misspelling of a customer's name —an error in your accounting method— an unfulfilled promise; these are valuable assets if they teach you exactness.

Let your mistakes shape your system and your system will prevent such mistakes. When you discover a mistake, sit down then and there, and arrange the system to prevent its repetition.

Paint it on your walls; emblazon it on your door; frame it over your desk; say it to your stenographer; think it to yourself; burn it into your brain; this one secret of system, this one essential to success: DON'T MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE TWICE.

CHAPTER II

Guide Posts to Results

"DON'T" grates on our sensibilities—it is equivalent to rubbing the hair the wrong way. We don't like negative orders. There are, however, a few rules and generalities, that are a necessary part of a course in desk routine. These rules are the axioms of desk system, and every office man should get them firmly fixed in his mind before he attempts to put in practice the broader, more complex principles of desk management.

These rules have been printed a great many times, in part and in whole, but they are presented here as they were given to all the employees of a great middle west corporation, with orders to read them and memorize them, as they would a catechism of business success.

A Series of "Don'ts" Which Save Time and Fill the Money Drawer

Rule 1.—Don't let go of a single paper, a letter or a duty of any kind entrusted to your care for execution, until you have made a "tickler" memo of it, so you can follow it up to the end and know what becomes of it.

Rule 2.—Interview your tickler every morning. Make it the first "office assistant" you see and consult at

every day's beginning. Then plan your day's work, in accordance with what the tickler tells you to do on that day.

Rule 3.—After the tickler has been consulted, and you have clearly fixed in your mind the important things that must be done to-day, the new papers coming over your desk next deserve attention.

Rule 4.—Whatever unfinished work you have left over at night, should always be left in the upper right hand drawer of your desk. This does not mean part of your unfinished work—and the rest of it scattered through fifty-seven different pigeon-holes and compartments. It means all of it; the first rule of system is to have one definite, unvarying place for each kind of work. If by any chance you can't get it all in that drawer, see that a memo is placed in the drawer, showing where the overflow can be found.

Rule 5.—Men who make and break promises are not always men who are intentionally dishonest. Sometimes they are simply good natured, and dislike to say "No" when asked to accomplish a given task. Yet there is no worker who causes more trouble for others, and more unhappiness for himself, than the man who continually makes loose agreements, without first carefully calculating their feasibility.

To break this habit should be the foremost purpose of the system man. Let him resolve to make no agreement, either spoken or written, as to the delivery or shipment of goods, the completion of a task, the accomplishment of any business contract, until he has fully investigated all the conditions and knows to a certainty that his promise can be easily and promptly fulfilled—that it will be so fulfilled.

Rule 6.—When you make a promise, make a note of it. Put it down in good big black and white on your tickler, and then use every energy within your power to see that it is fulfilled. The tickler memoranda should keep coming around, like a troublesome book agent, to remind you of your promise, keeping you in touch with every stage of the work that has been done on it, and then should come up finally about two days ahead of the maturity of your promise, so that it can be investigated carefully and final action put through.

Rule 7.—It is human to err, and when you find you have been extravagant in your agreement, notify the "promisee," explain the situation, and give him a revised promise. Don't wait for him to notify you; forestall his criticism by a frank admission of a mistake, explain the circumstances, and get him to admit the justification of the delay. All men are reasonable; a letter of explanation "in time saves nine" of complaints later on.

Rule 8.—A manager is the first man entitled to know what is going on. If a crisis arises, he should be the first man to know of it, because he must be the first man to weigh, consider, decide and act. All new work or new correspondence coming into a department should pass first into its manager's hands. After that, further details can be taken up by those outside of the department with the superintendents, the correspondents or clerks.

Developing an Office Spirit—A Dynamo of Business Energy

It should be, lastly, the endeavor of every office man to carry into his work an office spirit. Let him remember:

To see that everyone receives equal consideration.

To keep every promise.

To forget nothing turned over to him.

To keep always abreast of all work.

To look ahead in his work—plan for the future as well as take care of the work of today.

And finally, to study his own individual position, and the work in his charge so as to impress, broaden and economize.

Off Coats and Dig

SUCCESS NUGGETS do not lie scattered about the surface-soil of the business gold-mine. Work—hard, relentless, pick-and-shovel work—alone unearths life's greatest prizes.

Quit scraping over the surface of your business chances—quit remaining content with the pay-dirt on the outer edges of your commercial prospects. There is a nugget in every opportunity—if you only delve deep enough to get it.

And don't merely dig, without aim or method. Just as the miner assays his claim before he sinks his shaft, so should you probe each business possibility before you begin to work it.

First locate your claim—your main chance. Then prove it. Then plan your system to work it. Then take off your coat and Dig.

CHAPTER III

System in the Desk

A DESK is not meant to be a junk heap or a remnant counter for accumulating every imaginable kind of commercial material. It is a business work bench, and every inch, corner and crevice of its space should be devoted to holding just those things needed in the day's routine—to these solely and wholly—and to nothing more.

A carpenter would have a pretty time getting at his working utensils speedily and conveniently if he buried them every day under the chips and shavings of his work. Clear away the debris of the day's campaign after it is finished. Don't allow the waste products—the chips and shavings of your labor—to pile up in desk drawers and pigeon-holes. Don't let the matters that are "dead and gone" cover up and blot out the live active material you have to refer to constantly. Make your desk an orderly workshop, with every tool in its own proper place—and nothing else within its compartments that has no everyday working purpose.

This may seem very simple and commonplace advice to the hardened desk-pioneer. Condensed, it says simply "Be Neat." Yet it is the one great heart-secret of sys-

tem, and we must begin to observe it right here and now, if we are ever to possess and master a complete and perfect desk system.

Sweeping Out the Rubbish, and Beginning Anew with a Clean Desk

Let us begin this system-installation then, with a first-class house cleaning. Let us sweep out the old order before we put in the new one. We will begin with the lower deep drawer, for that is the drawer foremost in "dusty uncertainties." Have you had any use for those dog-eared paper bundles piled knee high in its "bottomless depths?" Suppose you had to locate instantly, the contract you placed in this drawer a week ago, could you put your hand down into the unclassified junk heap and immediately extract the desired document? And take the drawer on the opposite side,—how many times have you had occasion to consult a single one of the countless catalogs and price-lists you have tossed into it carelessly and thoughtlessly day after day during the past year? Once? Twice? Then clear them out and put them somewhere else. Get a special file for them if necessary, but don't let matters which you will refer to, at best, but once a month, interfere with data you must consult perhaps once a day.

Now then, with a clean desk at the start, the problem is to keep it clean—to make it as orderly as a puritanical copy book, with a place and a system for taking care of every kind of material that comes within the desk domain. For we want no back-sliding desks, no relapses to the old disordered order. No signing the system pledge only to break it when the test of rush work comes.

The first great law of system is classification—a right place for the right thing. Classification is almost a synonym of systematization. It is bringing order out of chaos, having one definite everlasting location for each definite kind of material—and keeping that material always there.

A bookkeeper with a million accounts can always turn to each one, because there is only one place to look for it, and it is always in that place. Classification, and an index, do the trick. It is these that enable you to put a thousand subjects in an encyclopedia, or a thousand kinds of merchandise in a stock room, and yet find in a flash any particular subject or article you may demand.

Indexing the Workshop, and Establishing a Desk System—Four Kinds of Materials

A business man should divide up his desk, its compartments and its contents as a bookkeeper does his accounts,—one place for this kind of material, another place for that kind, and so on through all the classifications of his work and papers,—each place arranged judiciously and conveniently, to best facilitate the day's routine.

There are four kinds of material that should remain in the office man's desk, after it has been stripped of the dead wood.

1. The unfinished matters—letters and papers he is now working on.

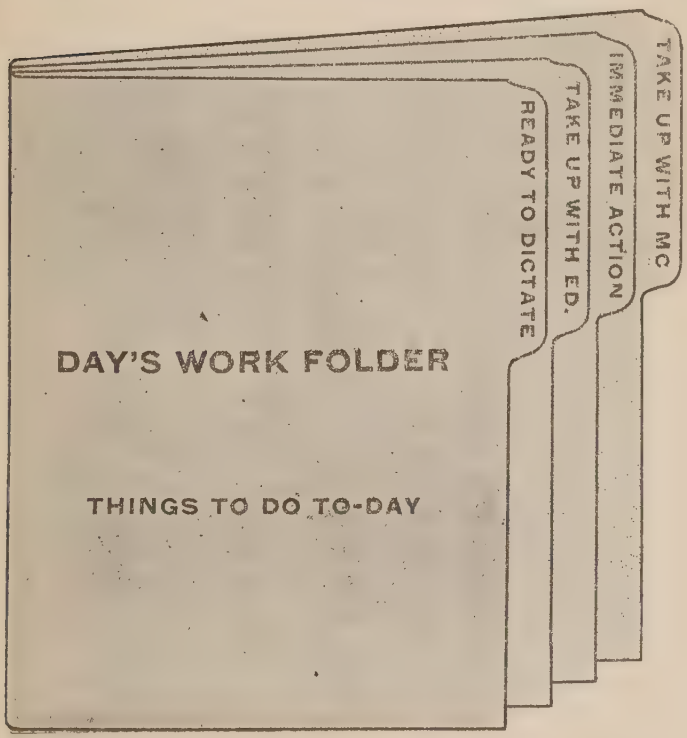
2. The matters pending or papers held up for attention at a future date.

3. The completed matters—letters and data—that have had attention and are ready to file or to go to some one else.

4. The business working tools; stationery, letterheads, pen and ink, ruler, shears, etc.

There are two divisions to the first classification. Some of our unfinished work will brook no delay, we must do it to-day, if ever. The rest of the unfinished work, while it demands early attention, does not necessarily require immediate completion.

The work to be completed today should not be placed in the desk drawers at all; it should be kept on top,



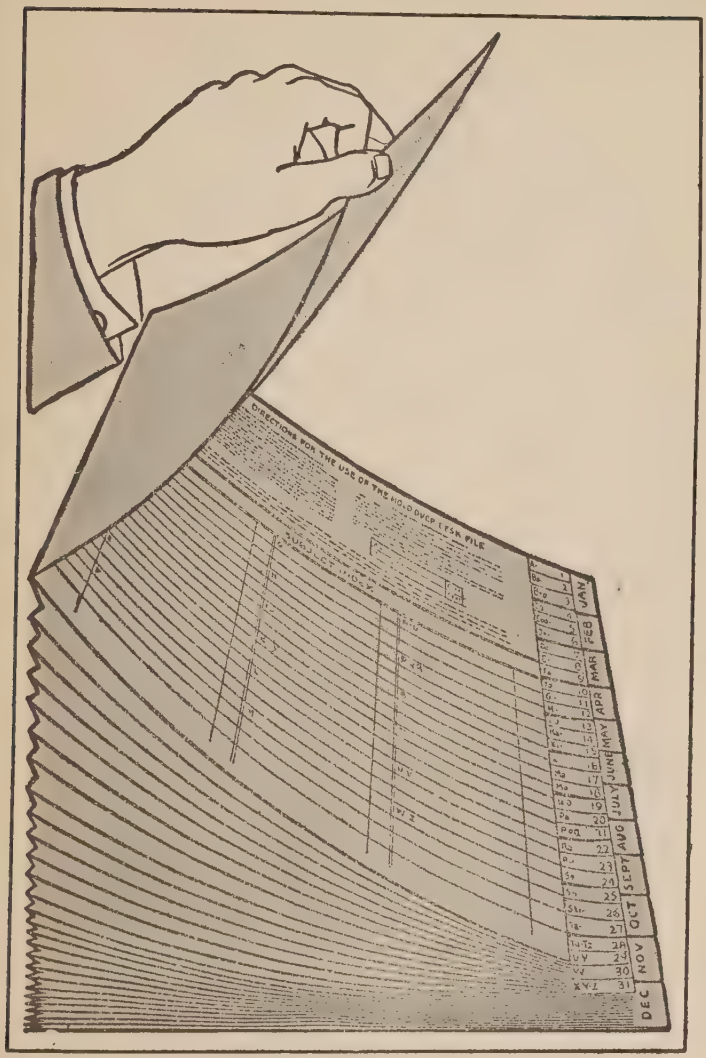
Form I: By tying four stout folders together, a portfolio such as this can be made Stationery stores sell leather bound folders

staring us in the face, right beneath our hands and our eyes, silently urging attention. For work of this immediate classification, we need a "Day's Work" portfolio (Form I), which may consist of four or five folders tied together with a string, each folder holding a special classification of to-day's work. These classifications may be labeled to suit the character and needs of your own work, but generally a compartment should be devoted to "Letters Ready to Dictate," another one to "Matters to Do To-day," another to "Things to Take up With A," etc.

The balance of our unfinished work, though it should not be kept on the working surface of the desk, should be kept as near to it as possible. For as soon as we clean up the duties in the Day's Work portfolio, we want to attack the remainder of our uncompleted labor. So we will secure another portfolio (one of the same kind will do), label it the "Unfinished Work" portfolio, and place it in the upper right hand drawer of the desk, get-at-able with but a single movement of the right hand.

A Correspondence File that Eliminates the Memory—Specific Information

With this much of the unfinished work disposed of, we find we still have another class of matters to handle, and it is this class that causes most all desk troubles and confusion. These are the papers we wish to hold over for some purpose or other. The time is not yet ripe to give them attention; we wish to get more information or data before answering Brown's letter; or we wish to wait twenty days before we write to Stuart. For this we want a special indexed file (Form II), one that will enable us to file Stuart's letter twenty days ahead, and



Form II: The expansive Hold Over file, indexed by days, by months, and alphabetically, for holding papers pending information or follow-up

then forget about it, with the absolute assurance that our file will automatically bring it to our attention, when the twenty days are up. We will put this file in the second right hand drawer, and file in it, not only the letters and correspondence that we want brought to our attention for some purpose at a future date, but all matters we are holding for further data and information. Note that this file not only classifies matter by day and month, but alphabetically as well. It is a general correspondence file for matters or letters pending.

Establishing a Postoffice on the Front of the Desk—Getting Rid of Details

Now then, outside of our tools and working material, we have left but a single class of papers, the completed matters ready for the file or for the attention of someone else. To take care of these we will secure either a three-decker wire basket or a messenger rack with compartments marked for the special men or departments we wish to pass on our work to, after it has had our attention. For Mr. A, for Mr. B, or for the file, you drop each completed paper into the compartment marked for the man or desk you wish it to go to next. The office boy then delivers it to the intended person.

A good messenger service between one department and the others will save an untold number of steps in a large business, and will even prove valuable in a small one, where perhaps there are but two workers who communicate with each other. Just this simple rack and a few minutes of the office boy's time is all that is necessary. With a messenger system in force a desk man need never leave his desk during working hours, unless he chooses to do so for some special purpose.

So then, in these three simple portfolios we have concentrated for instant reference practically all of our working material, both the things to do today and the things to do in the future.

But how shall we know what is in each folder without going through them all, each time we want this information? How shall we keep in mind all the letters and tasks in the Unfinished Work portfolio and attend to each on the day or hour it demands attention?

For this we need an auxiliary brain to remember for us—the last of the devices to complete our desk equipment—a desk tickler.

An Auxiliary Brain That Never Forgets—The "Tickler" Memorandum

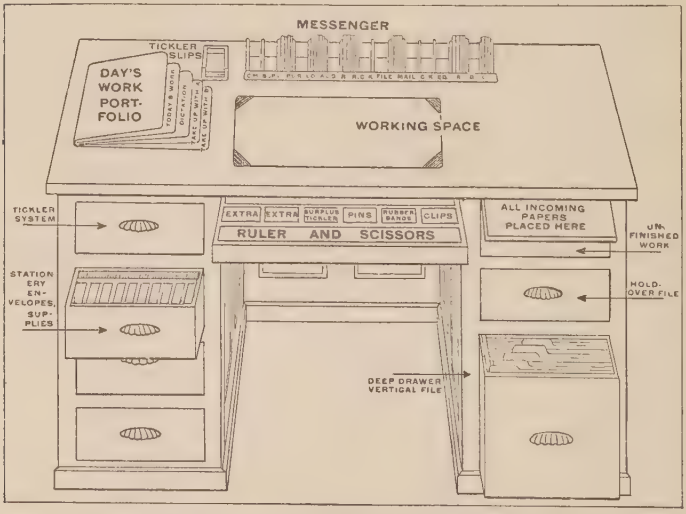
A desk tickler (Form VI) is practically a second memory for the desk man—a brain that remembers all he has to do—reminds him of each task on the right day, and jogs him up until he performs it.

As each paper or group of papers is filed in the Unfinished Work portfolio, we make a tickler memorandum of the work these papers cover, together with the day or hour this work should be attended to. The tickler need be but an ordinary 3x5 card index fitted into the upper left hand drawer of the desk, indexed by the thirty-one days of the month and the twelve months of the year. No matter how insignificant any task is that we have to do, we should make a tickler note of it. If we make a promise, if we contract an obligation, if we agree to a certain delivery or shipment within a certain time—use the tickler. Tickle the date we want the promise brought to our attention again, and leave the rest to the tickler.

All the memos thus made in the tickler come up automatically for attention on the proper date, and will act as infallible reminders that will eliminate all chances of overlooking any detail, cut out all anxiety and confusion as to the unfinished work ahead of you, and make it possible to fulfil every promise and business engagement on time.

The tickler and the Unfinished Work file thus hand in hand, take care of nearly all the papers that come to your desk and bring each to your notice in proper season.

The file in the second drawer—the "Hold Over" file—will be found especially valuable to take care of papers and letters you are holding for frequent reference, such as rough plans for the future, memoranda of schemes,



Form III: Sketch of desk showing working area and all the executive's conveniences arranged according to the system described

instructions from department heads, stockholders' reports and other information you may not wish to put into the general files and too personal to be filed with the regular unfinished work.

Needles and Pins, a Man's Troubles and How to Bury Them Once for All

There is now left but a single classification of our desk material—the tools with which we work. Ruler, scissors, a few extra pens, clips, pins, etc. These should be arranged in the drawer nearest the hand that uses them—the wide, shallow, middle drawer. A convenient arrangement is shown in the diagram (Form III) and it will pay any business man to fit up his desk drawer with compartments similar to those shown in the illustration. Without these compartments, every opening and shutting of this drawer will throw its contents into confusion.

It is especially important to keep tickler slips handy, for you use them again and again every working hour. Keep them in a tray or a box on the surface of your desk, and near the ink stand where you can get at them quickly.

Every desk man finds that out of the vast accumulations of circulars which arrive daily at his desk, there are some which he desires to save.

Today he receives a catalog of goods for which he is soon to be in the market. Tomorrow he may find on his desk a handsome booklet, describing an office appliance which he wishes to examine, some time in the future. Again, he is constantly receiving clever advertising matter which, if properly selected and saved, might give him valuable suggestions upon making up his own copy.

The desk man is aware of the usefulness of a large amount of this literature, but upon receiving it, he is usually too busy to examine it or select the good from the bad. Now in the desk system which has just been described there are three empty drawers beneath the tickler drawer, not provided for in this classification. The first of these, as noted in the diagram, can well be used to care for stationery, envelopes, scratch pads and the like. But what is to be put in the other two?

These are just the receptacles for the catalogs and literature mentioned above. The first of these drawers may be used for the catalogs in which are listed goods the desk man expects to buy in the near future. The bottom drawer may be used for those pieces of advertising literature from which he expects to get suggestions for the preparation of his own publicity matter.

These shallow drawers will require a few minutes of attention and classification work once a month. This should keep them up to date.

With the new desk system in force we are now ready for action. In the next chapter we will go through a day's work together and see for ourselves how our new system will work.

Desk Apprenticeship

THE desk man's tools are all about him: letters, files, phone, clerks. Not until he is dexterous with these is he ready for the real tasks of business.

CHAPTER IV

Putting the System into Practice

IT'S a poor manager who gets in a fast motor and hitches it to slow machines; you must get the other folks in the office in accord with your fast system before you can get the best results from it. Have them thoroughly understand that all letters and work coming to your desk must be placed in one place and nowhere else —on the right hand edge. No matter what it is—mail, letters, notes from other desks, instructions from a superior, every paper that can be called "work" wants to go in one pile, and on the right hand edge of your desk. This is to enable you to observe the first law of system—to keep the surface of your desk clean and orderly, and to have just one place and no other for new, unfinished work. This gives a complete understanding all around, and no messages can be overlooked.

Here we are at your desk this morning, and there is a pile of unfinished work on the right hand edge. Before you lay a hand on this new matter, however, consult your infallible advisor, the tickler, and see if he has not something slated for today that should take precedence over all new work. By this precaution, you are often able to set into motion at 8:30 or 9 o'clock, some task

that might be seriously hampered or delayed if held over an hour or so later.

Striking the Speed Limit on the New "Unfinished Work"

And now that we are fully ready to tackle the new unfinished work waiting on the right hand edge of the desk, see how speedily we can go through the pile. No old papers mixed in with the new ones, for there are no old papers in sight. If you did have some work under way on the surface of your desk before you started work on new matter, you gathered it all up and put it aside temporarily in the Day's Work portfolio. For that is one of the rigid rules of our new system—never to have any tag ends or loose papers scattered about the desk top excepting those to which we are giving immediate attention.

We go through our pile methodically and steadily, taking each paper or letter in the order in which it lies. We don't pull out the pink colored letters because the hue appeals to the eye; we don't extract the agreeable missives beginning: "enclosed find check" because it is easier to handle the pleasant things first,—this would be upsetting the regular order of things, and if we are going to be systematic at all, we are resolved to be systematic in the little things as well as the big ones. We just plod right through the pile, taking things as they come. Those letters that need immediate answer—and need it today—go into the Day's Work portfolio to our left, under the compartment "Ready to Dictate." Matters needing attention but not immediate attention, go into the regular Unfinished Work portfolio, which is always in one perpetual place, as unchanging as the

Rock of Gibraltar—the upper right hand desk drawer. And as we file away such matters in the Unfinished Work portfolio, we make memoranda of them in the tickler, with the date we want them brought to our attention again. Matters to be taken up with "A", "B", and so on—and today—we file in the Day's Work portfolio to our left in the compartments reserved for these men.

System Eliminates a Clerk and Finds a Private Secretary That Prods Us On.

Papers to be sent through to other desks or to the file go in the proper divisions of the messenger rack. And so our desk has been magically changed from a mere senseless storehouse of tommy-rot matter, to an actual, working, thinking private secretary that plans and lays out all our work for us, pushes us, prods us, spurs us until we do it, and then files it away again, all with the precision and certainty of a well oiled machine.

The secret is in one word: We have applied to our desk the one great basic principle of system, the self-same one that the bookkeeper applies to his books and the stockkeeper to his stock—classification. And simple classification, infinitely simple,—so simple indeed that we have now but three classes of papers, located in but three convenient portfolios, where before our material was distributed through a dozen and one different compartments, and verily, was of as many sorts and kinds as the hues of Joseph's coat.

And to top it all, we have an Index to our classification—an index to every paper and task and duty we have on hand. Our faithful tickler tells us at all times exactly what we have in our desk to do, and where the

papers and letters pertaining to it can be immediately located. It is a watch-dog against negligence—and more than that, it is an alarm clock against forgetfulness and sloth. It wakes us up when we dawdle, and calls us to action when we forget, at precisely the right moment when we should give a certain task our attention.

In the morning our desk contains its orderly pile of work; in the evening it is clear and clean, and yet we are hardly conscious of having made any special effort to make it so. We have pushed the button and system has done the rest.

System, the force that makes molehills of business mountains; grasps, sifts, dissects overwhelming masses of detail and reduces them to problems of A B C simplicity!

Strive for Patience

THERE is a microbe called Unrest. It breeds in many busy brains. It blurs many a clear vision. It unbalances many sound judgments. It sours a healthy ambition. It ferments into a passion for quick riches. It urges us on to undertake things overnight, that need years of mature effort to accomplish. It makes us unfit to do our daily work.

Acquire patience—a willingness to wait! Seek content—content that smothers unrest and enables us to do our present task with a true eye, a clear mind, a keen judgment!

CHAPTER V

The Executive's Desk Partner

A NEGLECTED convenience may become an active burden—a source of genuine harm. Like an unused machine, it gathers rust and dust, and soon passes them on to the other machines in the workshop.

When man created the first desk, he put into it a deep, spacious, roomy compartment, intended as the crowning stroke of a signal accomplishment. "Here," he said to himself, "is a space big enough for a big, healthy system to turn around in and have plenty of breathing and working space. Office men cannot say that I have not given them at least one unshallow receptacle—this should be the most useful and convenient repository in the office for the desk man's bulky records and working material."

Yet "from time immemorial" this compartment in the desk has been totally misused and unappreciated. Instead of taking advantage of its generous breadth and depth as an appropriate housing place for a good-sized system, its ample proportions have been shamelessly used as a convenient annex to the waste basket, or a sort of second scrap heap, rather easier of access than the one in the back yard.

When the office man has had anything dead and obsolete to bury or obliterate, down it has gone into his deep desk drawer. When he has left the office at night in a hurry, and hastily gathered up the litter on his desk, down it has gone into his deep desk drawer. Whenever he has had any conceivable sort of papers or literature of uncertain classification, the big, yawning chasm to his right has looked up invitingly and encouragingly, and down have gone the masses of nondescript material!

Booklets, catalogs, circulars, manuscripts, spring poems and what not—relics of the business past—have all found a peaceful cemetery in the unprotesting, all-embracing, deep desk drawer.

In all the category of earthly subjects there is no better example of a really good thing gone wrong than the much-misused and much-abused deep desk drawer!

Restoring the Deep Desk Drawer to its Birthright, and Exploiting its Virtues

The solution offered in this chapter for bringing the deep drawer into its own, and restoring to it its birthright as the most convenient and useful portion of the desk, is the inevitable solution—so inevitable that like all great inventions, it causes us to wonder why we did not think of it before.

The deep drawer is about the size of an average vertical file drawer, the greatest time-saver and filing convenience the office has ever known. What reason is there then, that the deep drawer should not be utilized as a vertical filing drawer—that "the greatest time-saver" should not be taken from its place in an oak cabinet, 'way at the other end of the office, and concentrated into our own business work bench—right within

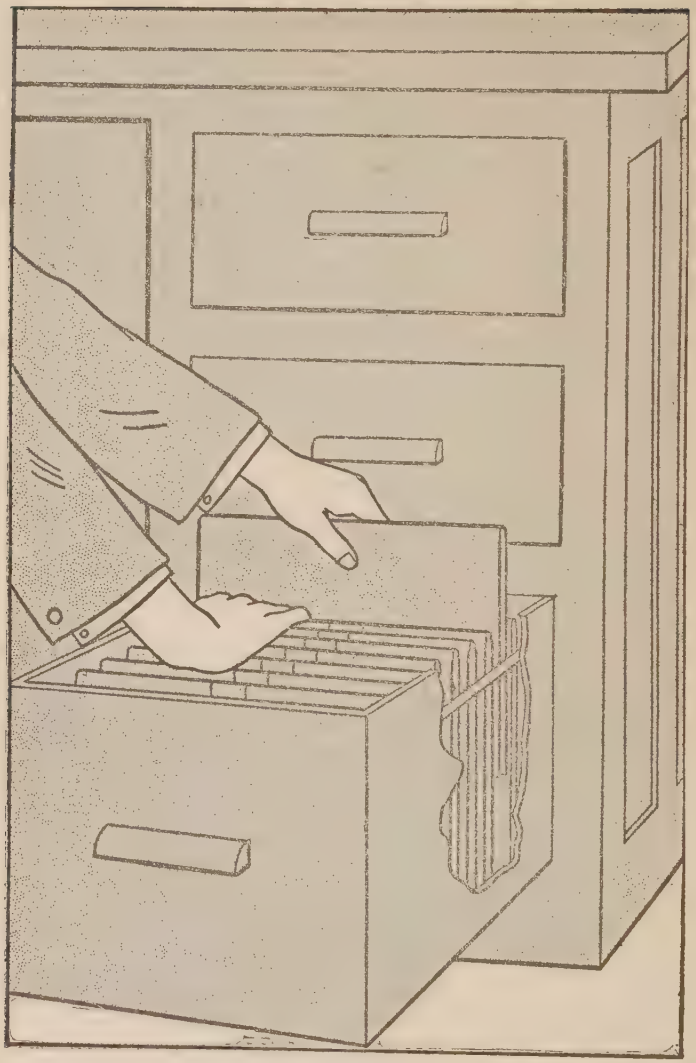
arm's reach. Think of the saving of steps to and from the old vertical file this would effect; think of the convenience and satisfaction of having our important correspondence in a file of our own, under our own lock and key; the economy and ease of being able to put down our right arm, pull out a drawer, and in three motions extract any desired paper or letter we may wish to refer to, all without leaving our office chair.

Securing an Outfit for the Deep Drawer File and Arranging It to Suit Your Needs

The "Deep Drawer File" outfit (Form IV) consists of a number of regulation size folders, from thirty to sixty, or as many as your drawer will accommodate. These folders are each attached to a rod or stick and are suspended upright in the drawer by two notched panels, one on each side of the drawer. Each folder is fitted with a moveable label or index and with sixty of these in your drawer you have the basis of one of the most exhaustless and versatile of office systems.

This file can do any specific thing, provide any convenience, serve any filing purpose of the regular vertical filing drawer. As a follow-up, thirty-one of its folders can be numbered by the days of the month, and twelve more by the months of the year, and you have in your own desk drawer a complete follow-up system in which you can file ahead sales correspondence, credit correspondence, matters or plans to take up at a future date, and all the regulation follow-up material, with the certainty that your file will bring each to your attention on the proper date.

Or as a special alphabetical file for classifying and keeping accessible, personal or special kinds of corres-



Form IV: An example of how three motions of the hands bring the correspondence to the top of the desk

pondence of such a nature that you do not want to put it into the regular file, it is exactly as useful. You can label with pen and ink twenty-six of the folders with the alphabet letters, and there you have your complete vertical file, its entire contents within a few seconds' reach.

Purchasing agents find it a gold mine of convenience for classifying and filing ahead the promises of "smooth-tongued" salesmen. When the wily business-getter hands in his prices, with a delivery specification of ten days, the buyer files this promise eight days ahead along with a copy of the order. Then it comes to his attention two days ahead of time, and he has an opportunity to "punch up" his salesman in time to make sure of a delivery two days later.

Using the Deep Drawer File for a Follow-up—How a Credit Man Can Use It

The credit man of a large installment house uses it almost entirely to follow up large collections that he prefers to handle himself. All installment accounts due each month on the 21st are filed in folder "21." On the morning of the 21st he takes out the contents of this folder and pushes all of his debtors for payment. Those accounts that are paid before nightfall are put back into folder twenty-one for attention when the next payment comes due on the 21st of next month. Those that are not paid are "dunned" and then filed ahead five days in folder 26. If they are not paid that day they are "dunned" again and filed ahead another five days, and so it goes until the delinquent customer cashes up his payment, when he is again restored to the good graces of folder 21 for attention on the 21st of next month, when his next payment becomes due.

Who can conceive of a more supremely simple system, yet besides its simplicity it provides unlimited convenience for the credit man in keeping all his big accounts almost under his very nose.

"But," you ask, "how does the credit man know in what folder, or under what date he can find a given account, should he care to locate it?" The easiest thing in the world—for he supplements his deep drawer file with our old friend the tickler. In the back of the tickler is a complete alphabetical index, and when Mr. Credit Man files Brown's account in compartment 21, it is quite "the easiest thing in the world" to make a note of it on Brown's card in the tickler. And so the contents of the vertical file is always indexed, and always findable without the help of an uncertain and often hard-to-locate filing clerk.

Make the Deep Drawer File a Private Secretary—Forget Petty Details

Executives and sales managers have used the same system as an "automatic private secretary" for following up the instructions they give to branch offices, men on the road, department heads and lieutenants. When the general manager writes the advertising man, "I want that booklet written by Thursday," who is there to remind him of it, if the Ad. man doesn't make good? His unfailing deep drawer file. He places a carbon of his instructions to the Ad. man in folder 25, which happens to be Thursday, and at the dawn of Thursday he takes out his folder 25, goes over the things due today, and if the Ad. man hasn't made good—look out!

In small concerns, or even in larger ones where the correspondence is carried on with a limited number of

correspondents, the deep drawer file may prove entirely adequate for keeping the entire active correspondence of the desk man "at his fingers' ends," and thus may forever eliminate round trips to the files.

The common method for using the deep drawer file in such cases is to label the different folders with the names of the different correspondents—"Brown, Smith, Jones," etc. If you have a good deal of correspondence with Johnson, give him a special folder with his name written on the label, and file in it all letters, "to and from" him in the exact order in which they were written or received, the last letter always on top. Carbon copies of all letters you write to Johnson should be attached to the letters Johnson writes you, to which yours are replies. Thus, in one folder you have the whole history of your transactions with this customer, and in strict chronological order.

Working the Follow-up Without Burying Correspondence—Systematizing the File

A follow-up can be operated in connection with this simple system by having a second set of folders back of the alphabetical set labeled by the thirty-one days and twelve months. When you wish to follow up Johnson for any purpose, take his correspondence, or the particular letter you wish to follow up out of his regular folder and file it in one of the numbered folders under the particular date you wish to send out your follow-up. At the same time, make a note of just what paper or papers you are filing ahead and put the memo in Johnson's folder stating under what date papers are filed.

There is just one danger in using the deep drawer file, and the desk man should be on the alert to guard

against that. It is the danger of using this file to excess, of permitting it to interfere with the regular correspondence system and the desk system described in the previous chapter.

No correspondence, for instance, should be filed away in your desk, that is liable to be needed by someone else in the office. The prime law of system, remember, is "one place for one thing," and in large businesses it is sometimes better to have all correspondence in but one system of files than scattered through various desks.

The ideal case for the use of the personal desk file is that of a manager whose department is clearly separated from all the other branches of the concern. The advertising department is a fair illustration of this situation. In such an instance, the general files would only be encumbered by the addition of these letters and records. Not once a month will any person except the desk man and his secretary care to examine them. Here, therefore, is a well-defined distinction on which to base the division. Certain documents are needed here, daily, hourly; elsewhere they are practically dead wood. The secretary must in each case understand the arrangement, limits and uses of his superior's file; the different departments must understand where to look for such papers in any emergency. Beyond this the matter may be strictly personal. Thus the absence of the desk man, or the failure to find a departmental letter in the general files will not turn the whole office upside down on some unlucky hunt. The economy of the system will be had, and the confusion of false system avoided.

The extent to which the deep drawer file can be utilized is a matter that the desk man can best determine

for himself. Uses will suggest themselves as needs arise. The system which waits upon the call of business but does not keep business waiting, is nearly ideal. It avoids the dangers just described. It fits the case. It does not incumber the future with a waiting list of misfit schemes which will eventually have to be cleared away at a "sacrifice."

The writer has used the deep drawer file for nearly two years for classifying "plans for the future," keeping "ammunition for future campaigns," gathering "ideas and data of possible future value," "clippings," and so on. An editorial worker has his desk arranged for filing the various classes of type proofs, page proofs, color proofs, revises and the like which flood in upon him in bewildering confusion week by week. He could not trust to chance and memory for a single day. At best there must be frequent "house cleaning," but his method makes it easy to discard matter which has gone to the press, and to classify whatever revises he cares to preserve.

The advertiser, merchant and shop foreman have like systems adapted to the work they handle. Here details rest until they have served their uses and are ready for the waste basket. From them are assembled the results which are passed on to other departments.

Inaugurating Method in the Desk with Fireworks and Illumination

There is a story of a corporation president who asked a clerk for a certain paper and stood by while the clerk rummaged in the musty depths of his desk. The paper refused to appear. The clerk grew red. The president did some rapid thinking.

Going from desk to desk, he demanded, "Do you know what is in that drawer?"

"Yes, sir."

"What?"

"Why—why—." The desk man hesitated.

"Dump it out in the alley and burn it."

The inauguration of system in that office was marked by a costly illumination on the vacant lot back of the building. Valuable records were burned; the expense ran into five figures. But it paid in the end.

Do you know what is in your desk? When a phone call comes for some forgotten paper, do you conscientiously say, "Hold the wire," and make a one-hand "stab" that means business. Or do you beat about for delay and finally agree to "call you up;" then take off your coat, get down on one knee, and with wrinkled brow, set about to hunt?

Watch the Main Chance

A HUNDRED hindering trifles hang to the coat-tails of every great undertaking.

A hundred thwarting details threaten the fixity of every great purpose.

A hundred interloping interests assail the stability of every great determination.

A hundred wilting doubts and discouragements menace every great enthusiasm.

Determine; then spurn the irrelevant—keep your eyes on the main chance.

Part II

TAKING CARE OF DETAILS

Forget It

YOUR brain has a capacity limit. Don't overload it. Don't fill it with details. Don't burden it with worry.

Get a system.

Make your system your storehouse. File therein the little cares that wear and tear — the important details that annoy.

Make your system the guardian of the necessary, the grave of the needless. Leave your work at night, free and unshackled. Your system will bring your duties before you the next morning — the next week — the next month.

Train your system to remember all that it should not forget — to forget all that it should not remember.

Carry with you the success of today. File with your system the duty of tomorrow. Profit from your failure of yesterday and then—Forget It.

CHAPTER VI

First Aids to the Memory

CARRY the big things in your head—the details in your pocket is an axiom from the science of business. And the student of big business knows that a mind burdened with details is not efficient. The business man whose attention is concentrated on the big things acquires a perspective which overlooks routine and personal detail. While determining the big change in selling policy, he forgets a lunch engagement with a friendly prospect; intent on a hundred thousand dollar building expansion, he neglects to pay his life insurance. This, however, is not a weakness on the part of the executive. Details are lost in focusing his mind on the large affairs. He needs a mechanical help.

This mechanical help may consist of a pocket memorandum, a desk file, a calendar pad, the collapsible pocketbook, or a variety of contrivances, but the user of each should adopt a comprehensive plan and follow it.

The Advantages of Keeping Daily Memoranda Loosely—Cutting Away the Details

Loose leaf books of all kinds have so largely displaced the permanently bound style in office use that loose leaf

memorandum books have come in the natural order of things. The difficulty with the ordinary bound note book is that it is always overloaded with a mass of material no longer needed. In the loose leaf binder each leaf as it serves its purpose, from day to day, may be removed and destroyed.

A variety of specific uses may be made of the loose leaf memorandum to suit personal needs. One method is to date a dozen or more leaves ahead, and make notes of things to be done on those dates. Each morning the old sheets are taken out and the current date is always kept as the first page in the book. If some little thing remains undone it may be noted down on the next page or for some future day. This keeps the matter in the book always fresh. General notes not properly coming on the dated sheets may be made on the leaves in the back and torn out when they have served their purpose.

Loose leaves can now be obtained in a wide variety of ruled and printed forms. Miniature day books, cash books, journals, ledgers—all these may be made from the single pocket binder. Thus temporary entries of personal or business transactions may be made wherever the user chances to be and a concise and accurate record is kept until time of final entry in the permanent account books.

For the keeping of personal expense accounts the pocket memorandum may in some cases be found entirely adequate in itself, the different forms affording opportunity for proper posting and the striking of a periodical balance. Leaves containing closed accounts may be removed and filed for reference.

One pocket memorandum scheme which goes even farther than the ordinary loose leaf book is a binder hav-

ing on the inside of the cover a metal rim for holding half a dozen or more cards tabbed and indexed at the upper edge. These cards inside one cover are indexed with the days of the week and month, and inside the other with letters of the alphabet. A supply of cards, tabbed for all the days of the year, can be obtained and placed in a drawer in the office file. Memorandum notes for future dates may then be made on any of the cards as far as a year ahead.

Each Monday morning the cards for the week just starting are taken from the file and placed in the pocket binders. Each morning the card of the previous day is removed from its top position in the binder and slipped behind the others. This memorandum scheme is in reality a combination office and pocket card system, and has a distinct advantage in that reminder notes may be made for almost any time in the future.

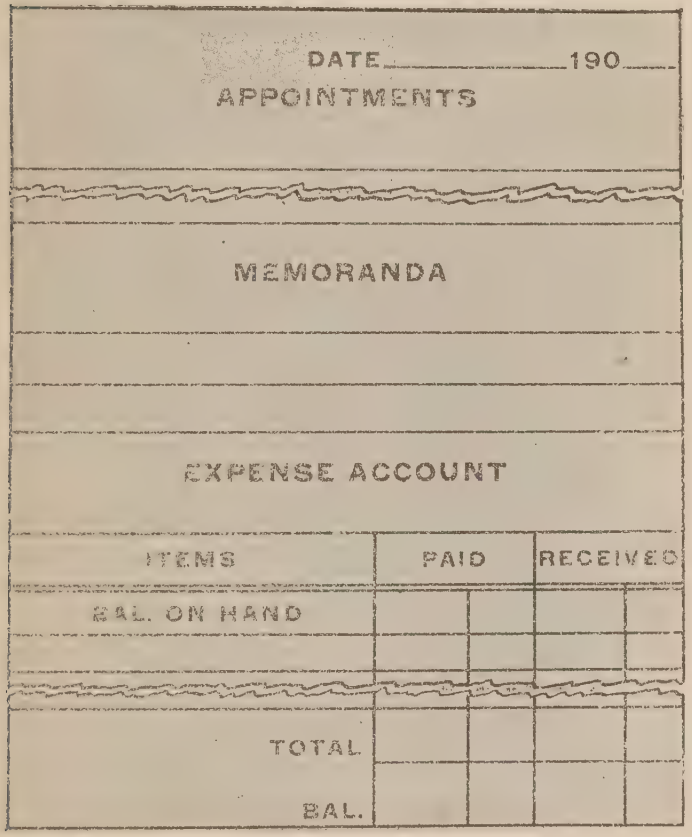
Every office and road man has constant need of a readily accessible list of addresses and phone numbers of business men and personal friends. For this purpose a note book with alphabetically tabbed sections is always the most satisfactory. Ordinarily it is found desirable to keep a small pocket memorandum exclusively for addresses and in such cases a permanently bound book is quite as suitable as a loose leaf. It is possible, however, to procure a few loose leaves tabbed with letters and insert them in a back or middle section in a loose leaf binder.

Points to be Considered in Choosing Convenient Memoranda—Eliminating Bulky Books

The only objection to this method is that the large number of addresses usually carried makes a loose leaf

book with addresses and its other contents too bulky for convenient use.

Probably for the majority of business men leaves for the notes of each day's transactions would be found sufficient. These filed in the memorandum book for ten or fifteen days ahead would no doubt be adequate to



Form V: Two sheets from loose leaf pocket memo. Personal accounts are kept here to be posted at the end of the day

relieve the average person of the vexing details which otherwise would tax his memory needlessly. In arrangement these leaves could be suited to the business or personal needs of the individual.

For the private convenience of the executive a sheet arranged somewhat after the pattern of the accompanying illustration (Form V), might be found convenient. A number of sheets could be printed at a time and could be used as needed. A different arrangement could be adopted as found expedient and the form varied indefinitely.

No strict rules could be either given or followed for the use of pocket memoranda. Each man for himself chooses the form best suited to his needs.

Calendar Pads, Desk Memos and the "Brain Box"—How they Aid the Busy Man

Every office man should have some kind of a dated desk reminder which, with the current date always uppermost, will keep constantly before him a list of things still undone.

The simplest form of desk reminder is the calendar pad with a sheet for each day of the year. The day of the month is printed in large figures and in smaller type appears the day of the week, the number of days of the year passed, and number yet to come. These conveniences for correspondence and interest figuring occupy about a third of each sheet, leaving the remainder blank for notes. By simply lifting the leaves, entries may be made ahead for any date during the year.

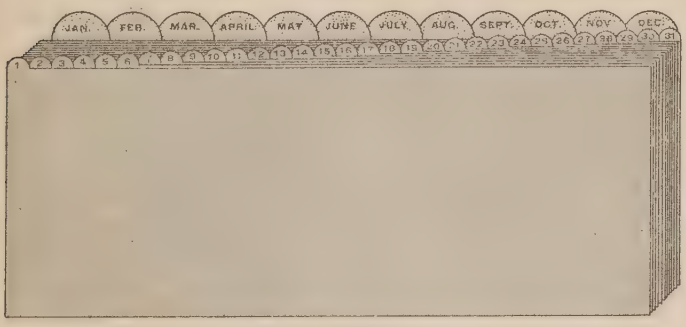
Each evening upon leaving the office the user should tear off the sheet for that day, transfer to the morrow's list any items postponed and write down all other fore-

seen duties. Thus upon reaching his desk next morning he finds staring him in the face, a clearly defined list of things to do.

A slight variation of this form of memo pad which has an additional advantage is that which holds the leaves together by rings instead of a glued or perforated edge. On this pad the leaves, instead of being torn off and destroyed each day, are simply turned back, leaving the blank reverse side as additional space for making notes over the next day's date.

The Use of the Office Man's "Brain Box"—The Card Tickler

A radical departure from the desk pad form of reminder is the "brain box" or card tickler (Form VI). It is an adaptation of the card index idea and overcomes the most serious objection to the desk pad—the necessity of rewriting items postponed from time to time. The equipment consists of a box fitted with tabbed partition cards numbered from one to thirty-one and a set of twelve additional cards for the months of the year.



Form VI: Showing the guide cards for the thirty-one days of the month and the twelve months of the year, by means of which every task attracts notice at the proper time

When any matter arises which is to receive attention at some future time a slip containing a record of it is dropped behind the card of proper date. Anything can be inserted—visiting or business cards, slips of paper—anything that will call up the thing to be done. Each morning, by taking out the slips in the compartment of even date, the user has brought to his attention all particulars of his day's work as far as it has been possible to schedule it ahead. Furthermore, if any matter is not finished on the day it comes up, the original slip is simply filed ahead to the next day without the necessity of any rewriting. This acts as an effective follow-up.

Many men who are away from their desks more or less each day use a pocket auxiliary to the desk tickler. This saves the minutes and the chances of forgetfulness or copying errors involved in the transfer of items from the note book to the cards.

The extent to which the office man must rely upon mechanical means of calling things to his attention depends upon the nature of his work. For the one-man business a simple desk pad is often sufficient; the office executive must have a complete desk system. But whatever the need, a "brain box" of some description proves a mighty assistant in clearing away the day's work as promptly as possible.

Be Ready

OPPORTUNITY can't be clapped into jail while we learn to handle it. Be ready. Mastery finds a short cut to opportunity.

CHAPTER VII

The Tickler as a Business Getter

THERE is one subject that has undying, unceasing interest to every living person. It matters not how familiar and worn-out it may be; it matters not that it is as close to us perpetually as our own skin and bones; that we think it, talk it, get up with it, and go to bed with it a lifetime, it is still as youthful, as refreshing and fascinating as it was the first day we heard of it; and so it will continue to be to the end of time—as long as men are men of clay and dust, of weaknesses and vanities.

And that subject of subjects is Ourselves.

You, to you; me to me; the other fellow, to the other fellow: this is, to each of us respectively, the most fascinating subject in the world.

It matters not how crusty, frigid or unapproachable the individual, you can reach him and win him, through the open sesame of his self-interest. "When you talk to the buyer, talk not *our* goods, but *his* needs," talk "*him* not *us*," is the way a great concern puts the secret to its sales force. You may talk to a goods-buyer until doomsday about your own product, you may talk with the eloquence of Webster, the wit of

Twain, the diplomacy of Hay, without getting even so much as a blink of encouragement. But once you talk to him about himself, talk knowingly, understandingly, pointedly, and—ah, that's different. The key to his attention and interest are immediately yours to use as you will. Once his interest is fully yours—then you can talk your goods to your heart's interest.

Knowing the Prospect, His Oddities, His Temperament —Getting Close to the Trade

But you must know this subject of "Himself" if you expect to argue successfully. Because you say "You" to the buyer does not always mean that you are really "getting next." You must back the "You" with an understanding of it, you must know the buyer, his desires , his prejudices, his temperament and his peculiarities, before you can successfully talk to him about himself.

Most salesmen do not really know their customers; they cannot get close to them; "inside" of them; "next" to them. They rub this or that man the wrong way, because they do not understand his individuality or habits of thought.

The reason for this is that they have no definite method of securing, classifying and preserving "inside" data about their clients. The mind alone cannot do it. The salesman meets so many men of so many different temperaments, that even if he were keen and observing enough to read the inside facts about each customer, it would be hard for him to carry them all in his head to use in preparing his plan of attack.

Most salesmen blunder into the presence of each buyer ignorant or uncertain of just what manner of man they

are going to meet, or if they have met him before, just what sort of a humor he will be in, and what will be the character of their reception.

The Aggravation of Losing Sales by Lapses of Memory —How to Avoid It

"Confound it, I might have known that Jones would go off on that tantrum. He's just the same sort of a man as Brown, who turned me down the same way last month. I ought to have known better."

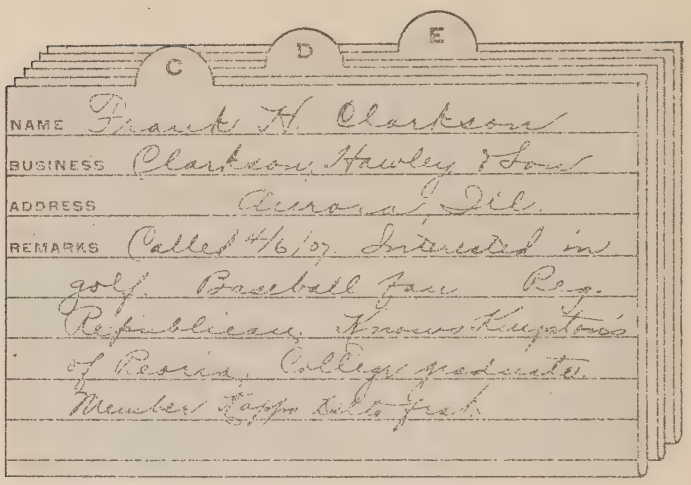
How often has the average salesman said that sort of a thing to himself, after leaving the office of a customer?

He ought to have remembered, but he didn't remember. Business men, to whom remembering spells success, have long ago learned that the human memory is an extremely deceitful institution. Nor is this surprising.

Every minute you live the various senses are taking a hundred different impressions to the brain. The wonder is, not that ninety-nine out of every hundred of these impressions last no longer than the ripple made by a stone in the water, but even that one out of a hundred leaves a permanent impression.

There are a very few men whose memories, naturally strong, have been trained to retain a great mass of facts bearing on some particular subject. But no memory in the world will do the work so well, unaided, as will that of the average and ordinary man, if it is properly backed up by our old friend "The Tickler."

To use the tickler as an aid in getting business, whether by correspondence or personal calls, we should provide our desk with an additional tickler outfit, so that we can keep our original outfit free to use in the manner



Form VII: How an alphabetical index enables the salesman to list accessible facts about the personality of each prospect

indicated in the previous chapters. Unless, of course, our whole work consists in selling goods and making calls, so that we have no desk work to do and therefore need no desk system. In such an event, only one tickler will be needed, to be used as will be described in this chapter.

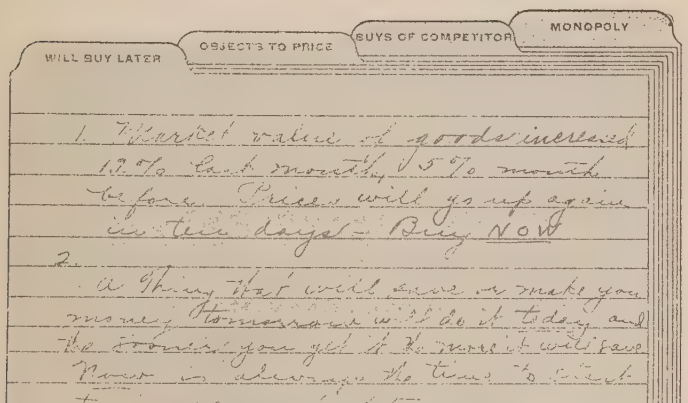
This tickler (Form VII), placed in the upper left hand drawer, next to the original tickler, should be fitted up with the regular 3x5 blank cards, one set of alphabetical indexes, and one set of blank indexes to be indexed by subjects, or by customers' names, as we later on find that our system will require.

How the Mechanical Memory Meets Incredulity with Sound Proof

In calling on customers you have found that a great many of them decline to buy, because, they say, they

object to the price. On the first index card (Form VIII) in your filing case, you write the word "Price," and in that compartment of the case you file away everything you hear or read which applies to that particular objection. Jones, for instance, has written you a strong testimonial, in which he says that he has found that the use of your specialty has stopped the leaks in his business and that, consequently, he "can't afford to be without it." You file Jones' testimonial, then, so that when Brown makes the same objection, you can have it ready to show him.

If you are a wide-awake salesman—and they are the only ones who can use a tickler outfit of any kind—you subscribe for a number of business publications. In almost every issue of each of these papers you will find one or more arguments which may be successfully used in meeting the objection of the man who says he "can't afford to buy."


WILL BUY LATER
OBJECTS TO PRICE
BUYS OF COMPETITOR
MONOPOLY
1. Market value of goods increased 15% last month 15% to month before. Prices will go up again in ten days — Buy NOW
2. A thing that will save or make you money tomorrow will do it today and the sooner you get it to work it will save more in advance. The time to start to make or save is right

From VIII: The tickler as a business getter, showing how the salesman prepares the stock objections of his prospects

Every such argument you find, you clip out, paste on a card and file away, under the proper index, in your tickler business getter. Before you know it, you have, with no tax at all on your overworked memory, a collection of all the answers which the best salesmen in the world use in meeting that particular objection.

Another class of customers refuse to buy your goods because they say that they can buy second-hand goods to better advantage. You label another index card, "Second-hand," and collect arguments which apply to that objection in the same way and at the same time.

Anticipating Bridges Makes Them Easier to Cross—Making Friends of Your Customers

There are still other possible customers who prefer your competitors' goods or who "don't see the need" of your goods; who declare that "times are too hard" at present; who dislike to buy of a house in the "trust." You make a separate index card for each one, and store away the best arguments to meet that objection.

And your silent partner, the tickler, will do much more than that. There are two or three buyers in each town you visit whom you have not been able to interest at all, though you are sure that once you get their ears and their attention, you could sell them a big bill.

Make out an index card or folder in your filing case for each of these buyers. The first one, Smith, let us say, is much interested in duck hunting. You read in your Sunday paper a full-page article on duck hunting, signed by President Roosevelt, in which the president describes all the joys of the hunter's life. Clip that article out and file it away under the name of Smith. Next time you go to Smith's town, take it along and

hand him the clipping, with the remark that you remembered his fondness for hunting mallards and thought this might interest him.

Smith can't help feeling flattered at the attention, and, besides, he is likely to gain a new respect for you as a man with a marvelous memory—no use in telling him about the tickler system.

A Working Tickler More Efficient than the Politician's Caressing Handclasp

Every buyer has a human side to him. Most of them have some fad or fancy. If you can't get directly in touch with him on the business proposition, suppose you try to approach him on his "blind side," which, in the case of Smith, aforesaid, was duck hunting.

For the purpose of making this description of the "Tickler Business Getter" as simple and as convincing as possible, it has been assumed that a salesman is the man at the desk. But by changing the titles on the indexes, a credit man, a buyer, an advertising manager, or almost any other business man, may prepare a tickler outfit for his own work, which will be quite as useful to him. And it should be especially noted that, whereas the human brain grows more feeble and less acute with advancing age, the "auxiliary brain" grows stronger and more valuable with every week it is kept up. More than that, when the man who has created it is through with his work, he may turn the tickler business getter over to his successor, who will find it equally valuable. In no other way may a man leave his brains to his descendants.

Once you get your tickler business getter under way and find out how well it works, you will be simply

astonished to find how much you hear and see and read that you want to file away. Daily you will find, without at all looking for them, items which will apply to one or another of the different headings in your filing case. And the longer you work with it, the more you will appreciate its value. When a brother salesman asks, in "deepest awe of admiration," how in the world you always seem to know just what to say to each customer, you will wink and smile and point to the upper drawer of your desk. And if you are a kindly person, who believes in helping other people along, you will take him out into a dark corner of the hallway and tell him the secret which is here told you.

There are more men than you might suppose who owe their reputations for gigantic intellects to the presence in the upper right hand drawers of their desks of a small filing case, with carefully selected subjects inscribed on index cards.

Concentrate

FOCUS your ability upon one point until you burn a hole in it. Genius is intensity and Digression is as dangerous as stagnation. "He who follows two hares catches neither." It is the single aim that wins.

Only by concentration can you work out a satisfactory system. Get your mind on it and keep it there. Watch every point—every detail. Hang to it with a bulldog grip till you get the thing done.

CHAPTER VIII

An Emergency Stock of Facts

THERE is an old saying that, "It is not so much to know, as to know where to find." It means, "Respect the limits of your mind—don't compete with the encyclopedia." Anyone who has hunted for that opinion or article which was read or heard a while ago will appreciate a system which takes care in a simple manner of all the material which may have been preserved. The business and professional journals and the many magazines are giving forth, as never before, a constant flow of literature on every topic of interest, the most evanescent elements of which contain matter of practical information to the business and professional man or contain articles of genuine merit that are worthy of preservation.

There may be only five per cent of your month's reading that you would care to preserve, but these choice bits which you separate from the mass you want for future reference and you do not want to wade through ninety-five per cent of dead matter to obtain the article which you consider of special moment.

Charles H. Spurgeon grew to be a power in the Christian ministry because of his inexhaustible supply

of valuable information. He kept a man constantly employed, who did nothing else but search the British Museum for illustrations which he might use in his sermons. These illustrations were properly classified and cross-indexed so that he was able to bring forth an apt illustration when occasion demanded.

Like a busy physician, the desk man in these days of "the strenuous life" must realize the importance of putting away his instruments where he can lay his hands on them instantly when needed in an emergency.

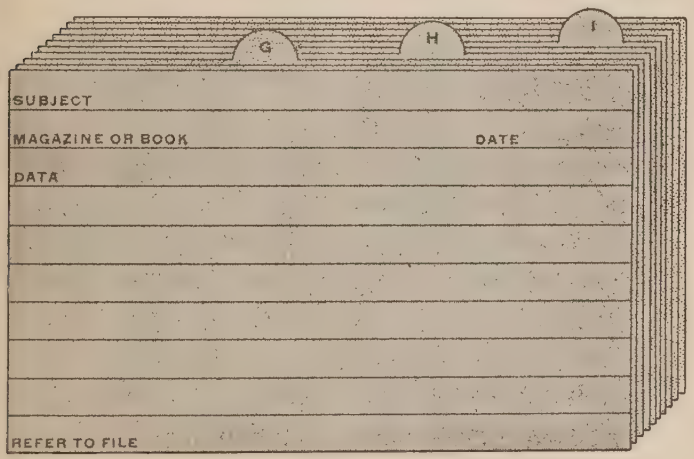
A Public Speaker's Secret, and How to Apply It to Your Business

One of our noted public men gives a striking illustration of the value of keeping and properly classifying clippings and memoranda. Through the sudden illness of the speaker of the evening he was called upon to deliver an address, with only an hour's time in which to prepare it. He went home and within half an hour he had glanced over all the clippings that he had gathered and thoughts which he had made note of on this particular subject. With merely a card in his hand containing an outline, he delivered an address which showed deep thought and careful preparation. Those who understood the situation were profuse in their congratulations, stating that they did not see how it was possible for anyone in such a short time to deliver such an impassioned address. He replied, "Gentlemen, I have been ten years preparing this address. It has been my habit for many years to make note of an anecdote and record on the instant thoughts that come to me."

A great deal has been written about the value of keeping and preserving memoranda and clippings, but

only crude means have been suggested as to the manner of taking care of them. The scrap-book has served its day, inasmuch as it cannot be properly indexed. The envelope system is also of the old stage-coach days. Many have been started and afterwards discarded because of the time and labor required to work them. What one needs is "putatability" and "getatability."

The system used in the office of a prominent manufacturing company consists of a cabinet within which are eight rows of what may be termed "portfolios." This cabinet contains about 300 of these portfolios, which are made of pulp board open at the top. The round exposed end is bound in leatherette. Each portfolio is six inches high, one-half inch wide and eleven inches deep. An index is arranged by taking the vowel with each consonant, as, AB, AC, AD, etc., and by taking each initial consonant and combination of consonants with each



Form IX: These cards form a publication file spacious enough to allow a concrete synopsis of the subject concerned

vowel, as BA, BI, BLA, BLI, BRA, BRE, etc. This makes a definite, accurate and complete index, taking in every subject and word in the English language, the arrangement being the same as in an encyclopedia.

Clippings, memoranda and manuscripts are filed in these portfolios under the title of the subject. F, for example, an article on the patent "Finsen Light" would be filed in the portfolio labeled LI.

For library classification, a card index (Form IX) is used for cards printed as shown in the illustration. This card index is placed in the cabinet and contains alphabetical guide cards. With these cards you read your book for a definite purpose, and any illustration or subject which you desire to refer to later is noted on one of the cards shown.

Do It Right

IT may be five minutes of closing time and a long way home; it may seem that more important things command you to hurry; it may be easier—more shame—to do it wrong. But take the time to do it right.

A thing done right is done for-ever. It is economical to do it right. More time today, perhaps, but less trouble tomorrow. System demands it of every one under you—of everyone over you—of you ; do it RIGHT.

Part III

HANDLING THE DAY'S WORK

Keep Going

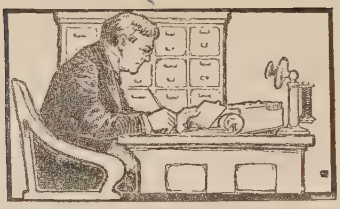
WHEN one task is finished, jump into another. Don't hesitate. Don't falter. Don't waver. Don't wait. Keep going.

Keep going. Doing something is always better than doing nothing.

For activity breeds ambition, energy, progress, power. And hesitation breeds idleness, laziness, shiftlessness, sloth.

Don't dawdle in the hope that inspiration will strike you. Inspiration is more likely to strike the busy man than the idle one.

Save the half hours that are wasted in waiting. Take time once for all—the best hour of the twenty-four—to plan ahead. Then keep to schedule. That is the secret of system. Keep going.



CHAPTER IX

Planning the Work Ahead

CROSSING bridges before we come to them may indeed be foolish, but there is no question about the wisdom of knowing we are to cross them and preparing for it, even when they are miles ahead.

It is said that when war broke out between Germany and France the aides of the great German commander-in-chief rushed to his bedside in the dead of night and awoke him from a sound slumber to announce the impending calamity.

"Well, what of it?" said the great man calmly, after he had heard through the breathless messengers.

"What of it? What of it?" chorused the excited group. "Why, what shall we do? We want your advice, your course of procedure, your commands."

"Look in the upper right hand pigeon-hole of my desk," he responded drowsily, "and you will find the complete line of attack and advance for the next six months."

And then the great man went peacefully back to slumber, as though he had heard no more than the disturbing ring of an ordinary alarm clock, discharged two hours before its proper schedule.

You may question that part of the story in which it is related that the German commander resumed his nap, while the legions of France were supposedly in full career against his country. The man who puts his whole trust in paper plans and is over-confident of his prescience, is well on the way to the proverbial fall which follows upon pride.

Genius in the Business Commander Consists in Foresight and Preparation

Yet there is the making of great generals, whether for business or war, in that foresight and forehandedness which anticipates events as far as possible, and then stands ready with eye and hand to meet the unforeseen. The faculty of never being taken by surprise, of having a course of action already mapped out to meet every possible business contingency, means much. It means that while other men are coping with the unexpected piled on top of the neglected, the real general is concentrating his full attention upon the little tricks of fortune, knowing that the usual and probable are in the grasp of his desk partner, System. The secret of one-man superiority is in the other selves of forethought who guard every possible avenue of flank attack and leave the contestant free to face the direct onslaught of events. Genius in generalship consists simply in being prepared.

The office man whose perpetual plea is "I forgot" is not necessarily a human being bereft of a memory. He may be simply the office man who has no foresight—who does not look ahead. He lives from hand to mouth, doing the things that turn up and taking problems as they come, without forethought or preparation. His office life is one long unbroken series of surprises, unexpected

complications, unforeseen difficulties, anxiety and worry about the ill-considered things ahead.

He has his hours of careless ease, to be sure; but they grow rarer day by day. Matters which seemed unforgetable, he finds gradually fading. He wishes he had made a note of this or that. He worries about the inevitable time when he shall be called upon for the things which he should know about and does not. The routine of a busy life mounts about him like quicksands. The farther in he gets, the more difficult it is for him to extricate himself. Everything put off, done wrong, left unclassified stands waiting, visibly, inexorably, for further attention. Confusion increases by geometrical progression. A jack screw will soon be the only way to get that man out of the rut and on the smooth highway of Order.

Eliminating the Bogey Man from Business—A Cure for Bad Nerves

It is only the "unknown" and the "uncertain" that inspire terror, fear and nervousness. The office man who does not look ahead is always afraid of the things that exist there, and labors under a constant stage fright that he may not be able to handle these things when they step from the dark future into the limelight of the present.

The only man in business who enjoys perfect peace of mind and serene mental poise, is the man who is fully prepared, who has sized up the difficulties in front of him, decided that they are not "such a much" after all, and then straightway prepares a Waterloo for each tough proposition. "If such and such a thing should happen, I'll do so and so," and then he can enjoy the peaceful repose of the historic German general, with the confidence that he has a club ready for the fray.

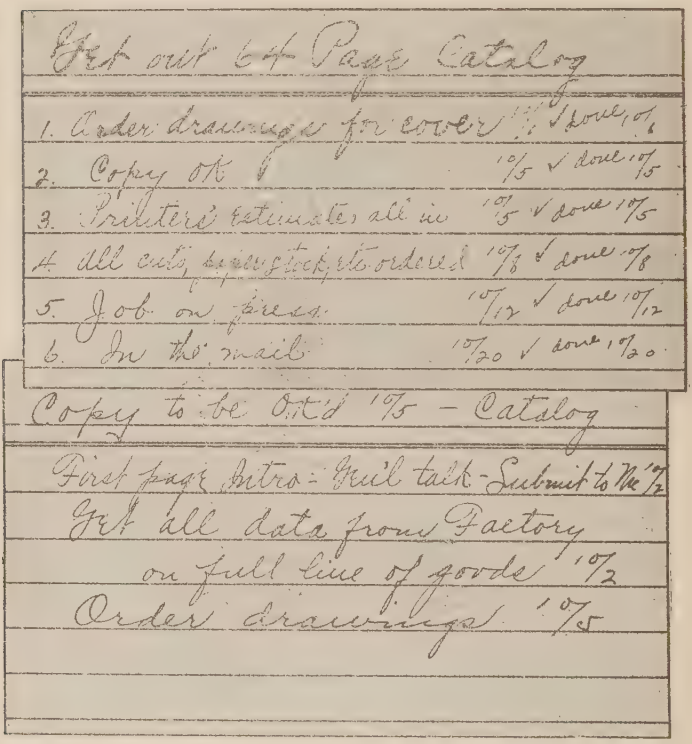
We cannot foretell and forearm for every emergency, of course. Thus your letterhead reads, "We cannot be responsible for contingencies beyond our control." But the point is, to prepare for as many of them as possible, to change the future from a line of dark, gloomy uncertainties into a procession of perfectly plain and definitely understood tasks.

Studying Out Future Battles and Planning the Strategy of Business

Every man can lay out some kind of a business program for the month or the year ahead. He can prepare not only for tomorrow, but for the day and the year after. The method is to simply take a quiet hour or two, divide the year ahead into seasons and figure out the things that should be done in those seasons. Every business man has certain tasks he would like to accomplish within stated periods. There is the "inventory time," "the advertising time," the time for auditing the books, for making the periodical "road trip," for taking the annual vacation. Let him canvass his mind for the things he should have done but did not do during each of these periods last year, and then let him make a note of the number of days ahead he will have to begin work on them this year, in order to successfully accomplish them.

Our silent partner, the tickler, is the only counselor we need to help us plan out the work ahead, and we should depend upon it to the fullest extent. Jot down on separate cards (Form X) plans that are to be put through at a future date, then file them in the tickler a few days ahead of the time we want them to reach the maturity of accomplishment.

There are vital things we want to put through next January—an increase in salary or in profits may depend upon them. Make an itemized list of them, putting each problem or task on a separate card, and then stating under the main task, just what specific operations are necessary to push them through to a successful end. After each operation of this sort, put the date this separate task should be performed, make a special tickler for it (Form XI), and file it under the desired date.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Form X: Two cards from the tickler, outlining the beginning of a business project and the tasks required to set it in motion

The main problem card we will file under January, and as we accomplish each separate operation, we will tear up the separate tickler cards we have made for them, and check them off on the main card.

Active Brain Cells in a Wooden Box—How the Tickler Discounts the Future

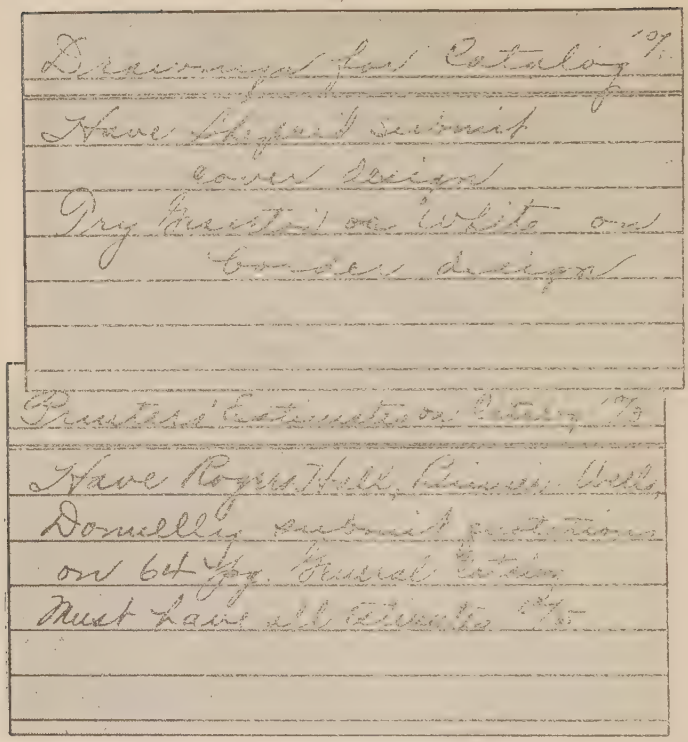
I am firmly convinced that the man who has the foresight habit, and who is a master of the tickler system, has really a double brain. And I very much doubt if even two brains, without the tickler's aid, could successfully handle the same volume of detail.

It is not enough, however, for the tickler to remember the big things to be done in the distant future; it should remember the little things to be done in the immediate present. That is its first and biggest duty.

No man can afford to rely upon his mind to keep tab on his obligations, even though his mind is big and strong enough to carry off the responsibility with blue ribbon honors and retain all he puts into it. The brain is not an index or a calendar pad; it should be left free from detail, from anxiety, from the burden of remembering little things. It should have a clean sweep, to think and to plan and to do the greater creative work, not the minor memorizing.

The man who has a reputation for a good memory usually has no exceptional memory at all. He has a good tickler and uses it.

The tickler habit means two things; using the tickler constantly when you are in the office, and having a note book in your pocket to use when you are elsewhere. If you are outside and happen to make a promise or an engagement, jot it down and post it to the tickler



Form XI: Last two cards of project, each filed in tickler two days ahead of the date set for their fulfillment

when you get back at your desk. This, and the habit of consulting the tickler unfailingly and carefully at the beginning of each day, is memory enough for any man, from president down.

How the Categories of Business Must File Away the Day's Impressions

The note book and the tickler have a great many other virtues, too well known to need mention here. One of

them, however, is the place they provide for ideas, impressions, thoughts. We are constantly picking up suggestions, hints and schemes that may have a future value. Our day's mail contains them, our business conversation brings them out; we get them in everything we read and hear. The man who says, "That's a good idea. I'll use that when the proper time comes," may have the best of intentions, but when the proper time does come, the chances are he will have forgotten all about his good idea.

Don't give yourself the chance to forget. Make a one word note. This afternoon when there is a lull in the desk battle, elaborate the note and file it. Just in that way have great businesses been built, great orations conceived, great novels given their keenest interest. The authors are few who do not note down the best and most novel ideas that flash across their minds in idle hours; who do not use the editor's shears for everyday happenings that are strange beyond the imagination's conception. The mind will not always respond to the whip; when least expected, it often gives its richest results.

If you get a good plan or scheme that may have some future value, make a tickler note of it and file it ahead thirty days. If you can't use it at the end of the first thirty days, file it ahead another thirty. Some morning it will come up before you as a Godsend, and your tickler will deserve the credit.

And to close this chapter, I wish to add just one word of kindly warning that so many—oh, so many—desk men constantly ignore: "Don't put off the tickler." Whatever else you must neglect, do what the tickler tells you to do. A command on the tickler is an imperial dictum that brooks no compromise. It is an obligation due, and it must be paid. Give yourself no days of grace.

A tickler might just as well be consigned to the scrap heap if its owner is going to disobey it and put off and file ahead the things it says should be done today.

Procrastination is as bad or worse than forgetfulness. It is not only the thief of time, but it robs the tickler of its purpose and value. The tickler must be fortified with the "Do It Now" system.

That a reputation for honesty is more to be desired than riches is not mere Sunday school platitude. It is sound business sense. And any man can have this reputation if he uses a tickler system faithfully and obeys it!

Learn More, Earn More

TWENTY centuries of business experience have honored this old Greek proverb.

There is no truer law.

The vital problem with the employer is not—how can I secure richer dividends; but how can I devise the ideas and plans that will produce them. And so with the employee, not—how can I scheme to get promotion, but how can I study to fill it when it comes.

You long for bigger salary, larger profits, greater success. Then develop bigger ability, larger capacity, greater thought. Success has its price—and you can pay it if you will. But ability is the only coin that passes current in its purchase.

CHAPTER X

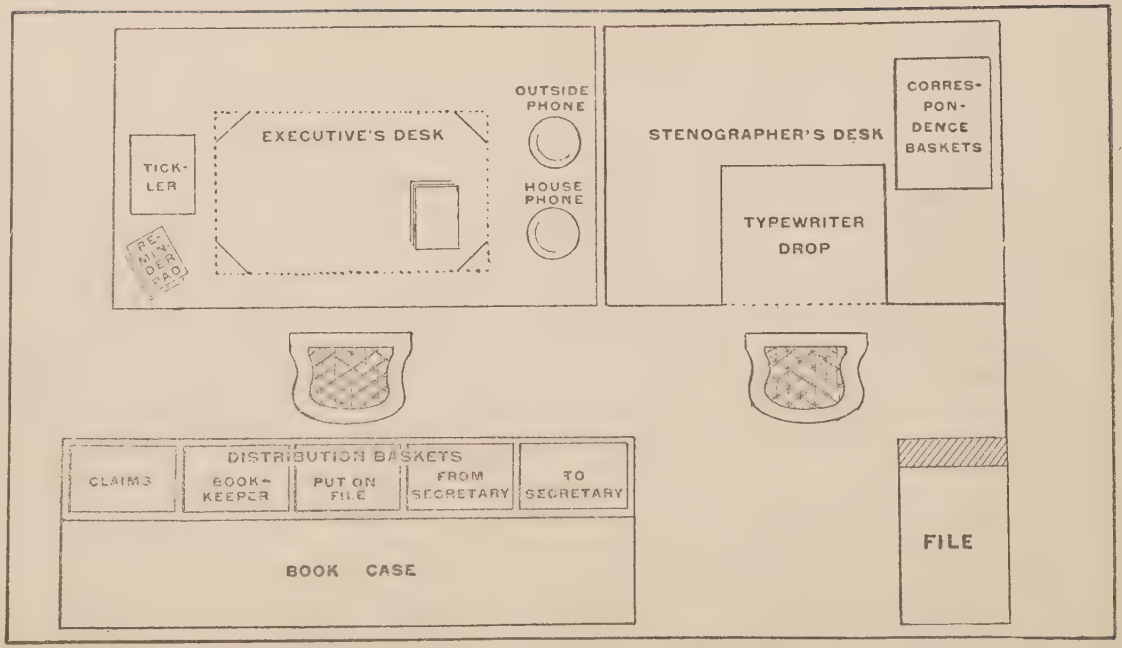
The Steps in the Day's Work

A WELL GROOMED, smug person, smoking black cigars—that is the portrait people paint when they enviously think of the general manager. That picture, however, is either conjured up before they know him, or is snapped in the afternoon when the general manager has cleaned up his work bench—his desk. He smokes afternoons because he works first—with a system.

When the efficient office executive arrives at his desk at 8:30 he has one absorbing purpose in mind—to clear up the greatest possible amount of detail in the shortest possible time. His object is to pick up the chips so he can get down to work on the big things of his business. His time is valuable—it costs the firm dollars an hour—and he wishes to apply it to important work—such as conferences with employees, with the members of the firm, and the discussion of matters of policy and business getting. One thing only makes this possible—desk system.

Clearing the Desk for Action, and Preparing for the Day's Work

In the first place, the effective executive sees that his desk (Form XII) is as clear of all unnecessary material



Form XII: Diagram of an executive's office, showing the convenient arrangement of the desks, files and baskets for taking care of the routine work

as a battleship in action. But, like a trained commander, he has the material at hand for ready use. Some busy executives have become so zealous over a clear desk that they have substituted for the standard desk a flat table, 2½ by 3½ feet, over which they transact all business. The only really necessary tools on this table are the ordinary office tickler, the reminder tab and the telephones. This leaves the remainder of the desk clear for the handling of papers and documents coming to hand during the day.

The large tickler is one capable of carrying an ordinary envelope. It contains tabs for the days of the week and the days of the month. As matters come up which cannot be disposed of the same day, the reminder slip is placed back of the proper date. The arrangement of the tickler is such that it is perpetual, and can be used for any month of the year. The reminder on the desk is simply a small pad for noting tasks of the day.

The telephones are on a swinging arm to the right of the desk, one the house telephone by which the executive communicates with all the departments of his establishment, the other the outside telephone. He places the stenographer's desk parallel to his own and to the right, so that the stenographer, or secretary, by the convenience of the swinging arm, can answer the phone.

Directly back of the executive's desk, so that he may swing in his chair to it, is a long desk or table on which is a bookcase. On the desk under or in front of the bookcase are a number of wire baskets in which papers may be distributed. There are six or more of these according to the special requirements.

The general manager delegates to his private secretary or stenographer, the responsibility of seeing that

all details come to his attention at the right time, and that his decisions on them are carried out. Aside from the material such as general correspondence, catalogs and other documents which go into the general files, the secretary needs but one set of vertical files. One file she uses as a correspondence follow-up.

Another file or drawer is required for holding any documents or folders of papers, catalogs or material of any variety to which the executive refers constantly, or which is confidential or on which he is accumulating data. The secretary files these behind folders on which is written the subject matter of the material.

The secretary the first thing in the morning picks out of the tickler file all matters that are to come up on that date. Any appointments or affairs to be attended to she writes on the executive's reminder pad. If tickler slips indicate that certain matters are to be considered by the executive on this day or certain data to be examined, the secretary sees that the papers or other material referring to these matters are on the chief's desk.

Thus with the co-operation of his secretary, his distribution baskets, filing cases and the arrangement of his desk, the executive does in six hours what an unsystematic man would be dawdling over when the janitor came around to lock up.

Divide to Double

DIVIDE the Day's Work: errands to boys—routine to clerks—for the brain of the business, only vital, worthwhile deeds and decisions.

CHAPTER XI

Routine for the Desk Man's Assistant

EVERY executive has an assistant. He may be an eight dollar a week clerk or a highly paid private secretary. In either case his desk system is just as important as that of his superior. For the assistant's one all-absorbing duty is to take from the executive he serves as much detail as possible. How much he will take and how well it is handled depends upon his system and judgment.

The executive's work nowadays centers around his correspondence. This is laid on his desk in the morning by the person who opens the mail, the executive's clerk contributing to this pile of mail such matters as his follow-up shows are to come to the attention of the executive on that date.

How the Clerk's System Cares for the Executive's Correspondence

Taking up the mail, the executive dictates various kinds of replies. Whatever they may be, the clerk's filing system will take care of them. This system consists in the first place of the regular correspondence file, in which are placed papers referring to matters that

are closed. Any letters or papers regarding negotiations which are still pending go into one or another of the follow-up files. If a letter requires an answer in a certain number of days and therefore is to come up again when that time has expired, or if a matter has been put aside and is to be taken up again after a certain length of time, it goes into the correspondence follow-up, a vertical file with thirty-one guides for the days of the month and twelve guides for the months of the year. The executive may make no answer to some letters and papers at all—simply directing them to be filed ahead. It is the duty of his clerk to see that they are filed ahead properly and that they come to the attention of the executive on the proper date.

In the same drawer with the follow-up the clerk may keep a number of folders for "other matter"—letters and papers which are not to be taken up on any specific date, but are held open, and to which papers and data of various kinds are to be added from time to time. It is in the use of these folders that the system may be varied to suit different kinds of executives. A sales-manager, for instance, will probably have a folder for each of his branch house managers; the purchasing agent will have folders for different jobs on which he is getting bids; a production manager will have folders for various matters which he has gradually worked up. This part of the system can be extended to almost any extent and made a valuable and convenient help in the executive's work.

These folders should be filed alphabetically. In the case of an executive, however—one who has a great many open matters of this kind, running perhaps into the hundreds—it is best to make a card index of the fold-

ers, according to subjects, and file the folders numerically. This scheme also allows a cross index to different subjects. To file the folders most conveniently the clerk should have a two-drawer vertical cabinet standing outside his desk. One drawer can then be used for filing current correspondence, the other for the follow-up and the subject folders. For all matters requiring future consideration not included in letters and other papers, a follow-up slip should be filed. This rule should be followed whether the affair demands the attention of the executive, the clerk or some third person. These reminders will cover such matters as insurance, reports to be made by subordinates and so forth. Instructions which the executive gives to third persons should be made in written form, and a carbon copy of them filed in the follow-up to the date on which the work is to be completed. When the carbon copy comes up in the follow-up the clerk himself should inquire from the third person whether the work has been done and report developments. The chief must know absolutely that his system will grind out returns.

Making the Clerk's Desk an Efficient Tool in the Office System

If the clerk has a one-pedestal desk he can use the bottom drawer for such things as books and catalogs which the executive or himself may want preserved for reference. The second drawer from the bottom may be used for stationery; the third from the bottom for supplies and the top for unfinished business. A clerk, even more than an executive, should never keep on top of his desk matters on which he is at work. As soon as he comes from the executive's office with his pile of papers

he should put them in the top drawer of his desk and take them out one by one for disposal.

Keeping the Top of the Desk Like a Ship's Deck, Cleared for Action

On top of his desk the clerk need merely have a three decker basket. One section of this is for incoming mail, and he knows that it always contains matter he has not seen and must take up. Another basket is marked "messenger," and receives all papers which are intended for other people in the office. The third basket contains all papers intended for the general file. The clerk should also have on his desk a folder for the executive, in which he places, as they come up during the day, any papers which are to be brought to the executive's attention, and the letters awaiting the executive's signature.

The foregoing system enables the clerk to keep his own desk clean as well as the executive's. It saves the chief's mind from a burden of details and at the same time provides for a ready means of reference to anything he desires to take up, and it makes some provision for disposing of all matters on the same day they come to the executive for attention.

Unload!

SLOUGH off the tasks cheaper gray matter can handle. Spend your force on real problems—the biggest work in sight—building, extending, safeguarding.

Part IV

WRITING A BUSINESS-GETTING LETTER

Know the Facts

IT takes a long time to write a description of something you don't know.

It takes a good many words to picture in another's mind something which you see only vaguely in your own.

Your brain cannot puzzle out intricacies, and at the same time make choice of words and ways of placing these ideas before another mind clearly, compellingly. Men soon detect the sham who explains things he doesn't comprehend.

To study out a problem is a man's task. To make someone else understand it is a greater one. Don't attempt both at once.

Wrap your mind about the thing you have to sell—analyze it—study it—finger it all over with the tentacles of the brain.

Concentrate upon it till you see it plainly in your mind. Then tell it. But first of all—Know the Facts.

CHAPTER XII

Winning the Reader's Attention

SUPPOSE we put a real business-getting missive on the operating table—take it apart, limb by limb, paragraph by paragraph—and then examine it under the powerful microscope of an analytical mind—what will we find?

A lot of smooth, well-rounded sentences; clever and brilliant epigrams; flowery and original metaphors; all this, gracefully strung together—and nothing more?

Bless you, no! Mere rhetoric doesn't persuade and convince; men do not buy goods because of classic and beautiful expressions.

We will find instead, the brains and framework, the heart and soul, the blood and essence of a salesman's talk, transformed like an old autumn leaf impressed in the family album, from real life to cold paper. That's all.

There are three distinct factors or processes in the letter that sells goods, just as there are in the successful personal interview.

First, there's the effective approach, the warm, hearty hand-clasp style of an opening, the eye-catching, attention-getting introduction.

You know what a good start means to a salesman. And to a letter it means even more.

Then comes the effective argument, the get-right-down-to-business element that does the real convincing and mind-swaying.

For a mere "smart" beginning, the sole ability to catch and hold the interest, won't sell a product.

You have got to focus this interest on the value of your goods. You have got to show in clear, decisive argument just why you deserve an order, and why it means money out of the buyer's pocket if you do not get it. And this is the work of the second element in the letter, the "reason why" element.

But all your argument and persuasion is of no avail if your customer doesn't actually sign the order. "We have a host of pretty good 'talkers,'" said Manager Buckner of the New York Life; "but mighty few real 'closers.'"

Often your argument will compel the buyer to respect your goods. But is it strong enough to make him decide to actually *buy* them? Will it make him say, "I'll send for that proposition now," and then make him do it?

Corking the Buyer's Loophole at the Right Moment and Clinching the Sale

If it won't, your letter lacks in the last element of a successful order-bringer—the closing element, the tactful, diplomatic, yet firm and insistent climax that flashes the order blank at exactly the right moment and magnetizes the buyer's name to it.

So far as most form letter-writers are concerned, we might just as well forget all about these last two elements.

We might almost neglect to remember that there is such a thing as a story to read or an offer to consider.

Because it doesn't make any difference whether they tell us about these things or not, we never get that far into the average form letter. A poor opening kills all interest and desire to read beyond the first paragraph.

Nothing, in fact, is so sure to bar and padlock the way to the signing of the order blank as a weak start. If the comedian's first joke, the speaker's first words, the writer's opening paragraph are commonplace and pointless, the prejudice thus created in the beginning clings until the end.

A letter might offer a ton of radium for the price of a similar quantity of coal, yet no reader would buy it if the first paragraph did not induce him to read about it.

And so, "It's the first chapter of a book that wins or loses the interest that urges the reader through to the last." Here all the ingenuity of the writer must be called into play, all the desires, interests and likings of the reader successfully catered to.

If a salesman can't get a hearing—if his approach is weak, clumsy and ineffective, he can't land a sale even if he knows all the closing arguments and star talking points in the house's primer. And neither can a letter.

Forgetting Self and Applying the "You" Element to Business

There is too much "We" in the beginning of the average sales missive. It's "We" have "so and so" to offer; "WE" contemplate "this" and "WE" intend to do "that." But what do you care about what "WE" do?

How are your interests affected by a statement regarding "OURS"? The closest way to you, is "YOU."

The never-ending source of attraction and concern to me, is "ME."

And so the form letter man who begins by talking about himself instead of about "us" or "you," will seldom secure the attention of anyone outside of the man who empties the waste basket.

For example, a manufacturer writes me to-day: "We have perfected, and are now prepared to supply our new, patent, brass-lined, double-rimmed, rust proof, excelsior gas burner—the peer of them all."

But that doesn't affect my cost of production. I hold no stock in the gas burner industry. He might as well announce the discovery of a new mud puddle on South Clark Street so far as my interest is concerned.

But if he had said: "See here, Mr. Gas Burner, you spend $2.50 a month more for gas light than you ought to spend. And yet in spite of this waste you are not getting the brilliant illumination you are paying for

"I can cut your gas bills in two, give you better, clearer, brighter light, and save you $2.50 a month. And the whole outlay to you will be simply the price of one of our new gas burners."

If he had said this—ah! that would have been a different matter.

For here is a letter that gets as close to me as my own desk, that touches my pocket-book, my business heart.

A letter that even offers to put some real money into my cash drawer. And there's no more interesting proposition than this.

The nearest subject to ME, I repeat, is ME. The ace-high theme with you, is YOU.

We sit up and take notice when the guns of attractive argument and effective salesmanship are leveled directly at us. We either must get out of the way or stand and take the shot. We have got to see, read and decide one way or another, if a good beginning gets us into the heart of a letter.

But when you point your letter-shot somewhere up in the air of foreign interests; or fire at random in some other direction the opposite to ours, there is no reason why we should budge an inch, AND WE DON'T.

The successful form letter man talks to you about your own affairs. He knows you are too busy to bother about his. And that's why his letters pull.

See that you get the word "You" in the opening sentence of your next form letter and in one or more of your first paragraphs in the "paragraph book."

Mold Men's Minds

THE purpose of publicity, paid or free, is to make the advertiser's argument a part of the community's thought.

While a man knows that he is under fire, he is wary and hangs stubbornly to his own opinion. Give him the facts and then let him think.

But when he finds that you have the right idea—when unconsciously he comes around to your way of thinking; then you may count on him to vie with you in spreading your doctrine.

CHAPTER XIII

Creating a Desire to Buy

IT doesn't take a magician to turn inquiries into orders; it takes a genuine, live salesman. A good many people imagine thoughtlessly that there is some unfathomable "trick" about the writing of convincing form letters. The mail-order business-getter is, in their conception, a sort of a long-range hypnotist, endowed with some mystic knack of turning sentences and twisting statements so that they bring in money.

But there is no "trick" or "mystery" about it. It is plain, everyday salesmanship; nothing more. And as often as this has been said before, it's still worth another double-lined emphasis.

The same kind of talk that makes us buy goods of a human salesman, creates in us the same desire to buy of a letter salesman. It is commonsense argument; the kind that makes it clear and conclusive that the goods described are the goods we need.

It is the kind of sledge-hammer reasoning that completely knocks prejudice off the mental horizon and supplants indifference with interest, conviction and desire.

It is the kind of "stuff" that makes us involuntarily say to ourselves, "that seems reasonable," "that's so," after reading each claim or statement.

It is argument, argument that makes the point clear, plausible, pertinent and decisive.

Generating the Motive Force That Gives Impetus to a Selling Proposition

Now, the chief ingredient in this kind of argument is earnestness. This is the spice that puts snap, conviction and selling power into a fact or statement; the tone that makes it seem real, transparent and acceptable.

Flippancy, on the other hand, has precisely the opposite tendency. It is a dilutant, not a spice. It takes the impressiveness and pungency away from a selling point instead of emphasizing and strengthening it.

And this is as logical as it is true. There is little humor in signing orders and writing checks; buying is by all odds the most serious phase of business, because it means paying out instead of taking in.

You and I built up that balance in the bank by downright desk-slaving and blood-sweating. To be solicited to hand some of it out, doesn't place one in the state for appreciating Joe Millerisms.

For the man who buys is generally as serious as his work; there is no channel between his think-box and his funny-bone. If you want to actually reach and sway his mind you must take him at his mood; you must reason with him as seriously as he reasons with himself.

You must show him in good old-fashioned George Washington figures just where every dollar of coin he pays out will bring back a dollar's worth of solid value, with a few cents extra for the honor he does us.

But seriousness alone doesn't produce orders. Nor does the fact that your letter contains sound arguments mean that it will sell goods.

The fact that Knox $5 hats are worn by the crowned heads of Europe may be a perfectly sound argument as to the merit and style of this brand. But if I am firmly convinced that I cannot afford to pay more than $3 for a hat, all the "style" and "popularity" arguments conceivable won't make me pay the extra $2.

Again, the fact that "Bon Ami cleans floors and ceilings and is used by the leading American hotels" may be indisputable proof of its house-cleaning properties, but if I want a soap that will remove a grease spot from my Sunday trousers, this isn't the reasoning that will make me buy.

Winning Trade With Purse-Reaching Arguments — Showing the Buyer the Proofs

The argument that really sells goods is the argument that is based specifically upon the needs of the man you are addressing; the argument that answers the objections to your product that exist in his mind; the argument that offers a satisfactory supply for some demand he desires to fill.

If I believe that a $5 hat is too extravagant for my pocketbook, it is verily up to the advertiser to prove my idea of economy false; to puncture a hole in my views of thrift by showing that the "best pays in the end." Prove that a $5 Knox will outwear several $3 hats and I'll go $2 above my usual limit. Your argument is then aimed at the right target; and it will demolish the one obstacle between you and a sale.

In other words, the man who writes a successful form letter must know a great deal more than his own factory and workshop can teach him. He must know every customer's mental attitude, every customer's tastes,

needs and tendencies. He must be able to look into the mind of the buyer and make his argument conform to the attitude he finds there.

He must be earnest first of all; otherwise his claims, no matter what their nature, will not be seriously considered at all. He must be specific and direct on top of that, so that, when his claims are considered they will appeal and convince.

Our recipe for composing the argument of a form letter according to these principles, is short in words, but sweet in results. Here it is:

Take several large sheets of copy paper—a ream or so will do—and before you write one word in favor of your goods—before you advance one boost about yourself, I say— THINK OF THE OTHER FELLOW'S VIEWS.

Climb over to the other side of the fence, and look at your proposition through his eyes.

Get down into tangible form, not every feature of your product, but every objection to it, not every advantage it offers, but every disadvantage, every adverse point that might keep the buyer from purchasing.

Think, also, of every objection he could make to your letter; every factor that might make him indifferent to a written appeal or calloused to correspondence salesmanship.

Then throw on the power switch in your mental thought factory. Think up graphic answers to the objections you have dug up. Paint your goods so as to dispel every doubt. State the facts so as to shake the bottom out of every fancied disadvantage. Then when this is done, and you have in your mind or on paper, a clear idea of what your customer wants, and why you can give it to him, turn on your currents of ginger,

enthusiasm and sincerity. And inject enough powder and snap into your arguments and facts to blow indifference and hesitancy higher than Togo did the Russian navy.

Two weeks later they may have to put an extra postman along your route. Exit your fond conviction that to most people (not you), buncombe and sense taste alike.

Order

WHAT comfort, what strength, what economy there is in order—material order, intellectual order, moral order.

To know where you are going and what you wish—this is order. To keep your word and your engagements; to have things ready under your hand, to hold your means and forces at a "ready"—all these are simply order.

To discpline your habits, your efforts, your wishes; to organize your life, to distribute your time, to take the measure of your duties; to employ your capital and resources, your talent and your chances—to do all this with profit is to know the meaning of the word ORDER.

Order means light and peace, inward liberty and outward command; order is power.

CHAPTER XIV

The Climax That Brings Orders

IT is a great art to know when and how to stop. There's the salesman, for instance, who talks you almost into an order, and then keeps right on talking until he talks you out of it again.

He does not know how to climax his talk. He can convince, perhaps, he can argue, appeal, sway and interest. But having so influenced your mind he cannot turn the effect produced into actual business.

The climax in all action is the decisive and momentous stroke. It is the pugilist's knockout blow, the author's thrilling chapter; the playright's supreme finale to which all preceding action has been supplementary and incidental.

Yet few letter writers even know that there is such an element in a good letter as an effective climax. The salesman learns from the very beginning, from the first contact with the man who buys, that the most important and decisive part of his plea is his "final argument"—the so-called "closing talk." Yet most business letters are abruptly broken off at the end of any commonplace sentence or paragraph without the least attempt at dramatic or forceful finale.

And then they are wound up with some moss-covered and meaningless phrase like "Trusting to hear from you further," or "Thanking you for the favors of the past, we are," etc., *ad infinitum.*

Strong Beginnings That Ravel Out at the End—Appeals That Fail

You commonly receive letters like this—letters that may even possess strength and power in their argument and body matter—and yet in the end fail to move you to action. They attract the attention, create a desire for the goods, but somehow you feel that you might as well wait a day or so, until collections are better or business picks up. And next day you give the order to the letter writer's competitor who happens along at just the right time, with just the right appeal.

Such a letter lacks a strong, compelling climax—lacks some inducement or clinching argument that makes you see the imperative need of getting in an order at once—Now, TODAY.

There are two parts to the successful climax. The first—generally the next to the last paragraph—is the paragraph that summarizes the significance of all the preceding arguments and drives home forcefully and vividly both the benefits of following these arguments and the ill results of ignoring them.

It is the paragraph that itemizes and elaborates all that you get for your money, and minimizes and belittles the trifle you have to pay, until the price seems infinitesimal compared with the bargain you get in return for it.

It is the paragraph that says to you, "Think what you are offered. All of this and this and this—and

yet for the insignificant sum of $—. And when all these articles mean so much to your business and your profits—when, in addition, you take not a penny's risk and can secure a full refund of your money if you are dissatisfied—why hesitate even one single tick of the clock?"

And then you act.

But after you finish this final plea—this plea that makes the value offered appear so great and the cost so small—*now how to get the prospect to act.*

When a customer's interest is at the boiling point, it is the pyschological moment for impelling him to a decision. Procrastination is the thief of mail order profits. It leads to reflection, and reflection to indecision, and indecision to postponement. You can undo the good effect of an entire follow-up with one poor ending.

The principle in this last element of climax is simple enough, but vital. It is merely this: Give the reader some proposition, some object, some argument that will make him see that an order today is worth more than an order tomorrow.

Showing Buyers That Delays Are Robbers, Ready to Tap the Money Drawer

It may be a cash discount; it may be a premium; it may be a special offer about to be withdrawn. Then again, it need not require any mercenary requirement on your part at all, but simply an argument that shows the customer the hardship he must withstand or the profit he will lose every day he is without the article advertised. Whatever it is, make it real—not a mere peek-a-boo for your profits.

A splendid climax, requiring no discount or premium can always be made by a letter that advertises a money, time or labor-saving article.

For instance, the National Cash Register Company says to the merchant:

"A thing that will save you money tomorrow will save you money today. And the sooner you get it the more money it will save. Delays pay no dividends—Act now!" and the retailer does act.

In other words, the object of a good climax is to induce the customer to get in motion and place the order in the first out-going mail. It is the procrastination-killer of the mail order business, the order stimulator that quickens the flow of sales and profits towards your cash drawer and bank balance.

The sooner you use it, the more money it will make for you.

The Mill of Ideas

YOUR services are valued according to the worth of your ideas. Your ideas are the result of your thinking.

"Ideas just come to me," is a common fallacy. They may seem to come in an instant; but they are the result of hours of thought. Nature's rule is imperative—no thought, no ideas.

If you want system in your business, think. System is the framework on which your business is built. It is the sole means of getting the greatest results with the least waste. THINK.

CHAPTER XV

The Automatic Correspondent

SOME men can totally disguise their real feelings and emotions, both in correspondence and in speech. There is the actor who can conceal a heart of sorrow under a coat of mirth, and the artist to whom the changing of a manner or a mood is as much a matter of ease as the changing of his hat or his overcoat.

But such men are few and far between in the business world. Generally, like barometers, our letters and also our speech take at least a part of the tone and tenor of our inside feelings.

When we feel right, we write right. We put into our letters the cheery optimism we hold in our mind. We are courteous, considerate, tactful, suave.

If a customer asks of us an unreasonable concession, we do not tell him so point-blank, we put the pellet of fact in the sugar of tact. We inform him firmly "No!" but we inform him pleasantly, slighting none of the little kid glove courtesies that give a warm, velvet, cordial touch, even to the letter of rejection.

But we do not always feel right. When we are tired and discouraged, when things have not gone entirely

to our liking; when aggravation after aggravation has pricked our mind and goaded our temper to the end of endurance, it is hard indeed to still use the kid glove customs, the gentle word, the kindly manner, the cordial style. We are sour inside, we have the "vinegar brain." How can we still write in the molasses vein?

That is why it is an extremely difficult problem to set a certain high standard for our correspondence, and to keep every letter keyed up to this standard. Our letters will vary with our moods and change with our fortunes, as surely as the weather does with the seasons. And in a house where there are numbers of correspondents, each of different temperament, all perhaps feeling a shade different, is it any wonder that we seldom find a large concern whose correspondence is evenly good, day in and day out.

Tapping the Keg of Great Thoughts and Good Will for the Trade

Now then, suppose we had always on tap, for use in fair weather and foul, in good times and in bad, the best things that have ever been written or said about the affairs of our business, the best paragraphs on our policy, our terms, our credit, our methods, our integrity, our goods, each and every paragraph a masterpiece, written when we were in the very acme of good nature.

And suppose, furthermore, that all this matter had been classified by a wonderfully convenient and minute classification system; with a paragraph on each business subject, so arranged that we could get it instantly.

Could you put down in three figures or four, a sum that would adequately represent the value of such a system to you?

Yet this system is yours for the mere reading of this chapter. It is at your hand now.

In every business house there are a certain number of business questions that are asked over and over again, a number of times a day. There are certain classes of inquiries that require the same kind of handling; there are certain classes of slow-pay customers who have to be written to in about the same vein. There are a hundred letters we send out each day that could all start just alike; and many of them give the same information throughout. Compare your letters and note how nearly identical they run. Why take separate time for each? Why not choose the best and make each IT?

The great trouble with most "paragraph letters," however, is that they are "dead-give-aways;" they seem machine-made instead of human-dictated. When the author of them sat down to put into permanent form the thoughts of everyday dictation, he lost his natural, easy, personal tone, and straightway became formal, stilted and "stereotyped." But this can be overcome by the method of formation as described in a succeeding paragraph.

It is not practical to get up form letters to answer our entire correspondence, for we soon find that no one form letter can be general and all embracing enough to answer any large number of letters. Each man will ask some special question not covered by the form, and if it is a printed form, it is very hard to add the additional information.

But if we had a complete set of paragraphs to answer every business question asked us in our mail, it would be an easy matter to pick out the different paragraphs needed to convey to each correspondent the

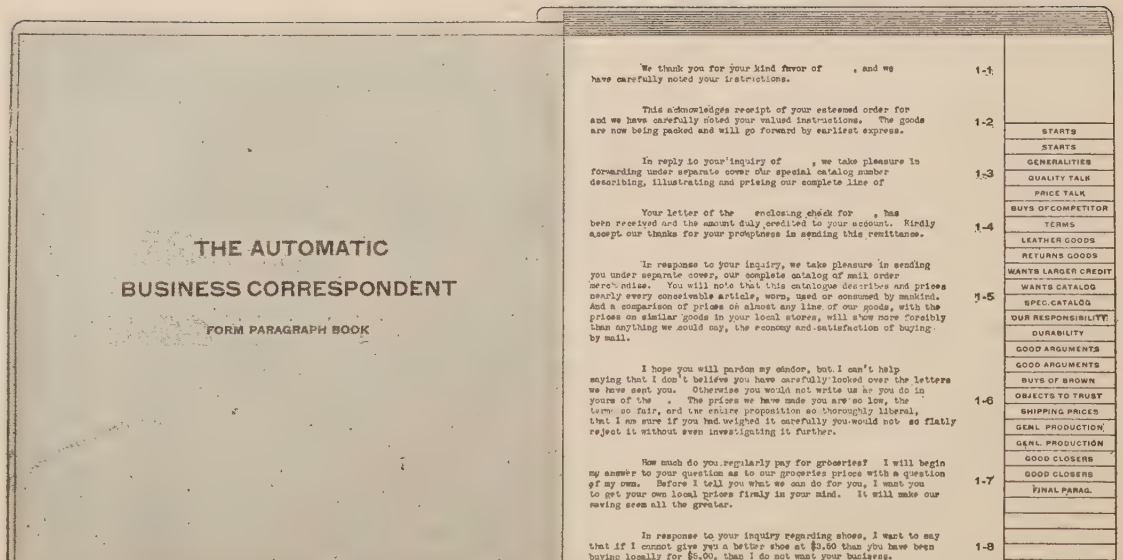
desired information, then fit them together judiciously and discriminately, into a perfect letter.

Making Your Paragraph System Personal—Limiting Its Scope and Defining Its Character

Our first step in compiling our paragraph book (Form XIII) should be to determine exactly what paragraphs are needed. No man can do this by running over in his mind the kinds of questions that are asked him frequently, because the fact of the matter is, no man really realizes how much material he does constantly dictate over and over again. When the writer started to put in his paragraph system, he was skeptical as to whether it was really worth while to bother with it. He thought that most of his letters were "unusual letters" and required special dictation. But when he finally dissected and analyzed his correspondence, he found that there was scarcely a single question or point brought up in any letter that had not been brought up a number of times before. And today, with the exception of his personal and important letters, his entire correspondence, averaging 225 letters a day, is answered wholly with form paragraphs.

The way to find out what paragraphs are needed is to have an extra carbon copy made of every letter answered for about two weeks. That should give you at least one sample of nearly every sort of letter received in the general run of correspondence.

It is well to set aside a good half day to go through these carbons. First classify them as to their general character, putting all inquiry letters together, all complaint letters together, all general letters, etc. Now further classify under "Sales Correspondence," "Wants


THE AUTOMATIC
BUSINESS CORRESPONDENT
FORM PARAGRAPH BOOK
We thank you for your kind favor of , and we have carefully noted your instructions. 1-1
This acknowledges receipt of your esteemed order for and we have carefully noted your valued instructions. The goods are now being packed and will go forward by earliest express. 1-2
In reply to your inquiry of , we take pleasure in forwarding under separate cover our special catalog number describing, illustrating and prising our complete line of 1-3
Your letter of the enclosing check for , has been received and the amount duly credited to your account. Kindly accept our thanks for your promptness in sending this remittance. 1-4
In response to your inquiry, we take pleasure in sending you under separate cover, our complete catalog of mail order merchandise. You will note that this catalogue describes and prices nearly every conceivable article, worn, used or consumed by mankind. And a comparison of prices on almost any line of our goods, with the prices on similar goods in your local stores, will show more forcibly than anything we could say, the economy and satisfaction of buying by mail. 1-5
I hope you will pardon my candor, but I can't help saying that I don't believe you have carefully looked over the letters we have sent you. Otherwise you would not write us as you do in yours of the . The prices we have made you are so low, the terms so fair, and the entire proposition so thoroughly liberal, that I am sure if you had weighed it carefully you would not so flatly reject it without even investigating it further. 1-6
How much do you regularly pay for groceries? I will begin my answer to your question as to our groceries prices with a question of my own. Before I tell you what we can do for you, I want you to get your own local prices firmly in your mind. It will make our saving seem all the greater. 1-7
In response to your inquiry regarding shoes, I want to say that if I cannot give you a better shoe at $3.50 than you have been buying locally for $5.00, then I do not want your business. 1-8
STARTS
STARTS
GENERALITIES
QUALITY TALK
PRICE TALK
BUYS OF COMPETITOR
TERMS
LEATHER GOODS
RETURNS GOODS
WANTS LARGER CREDIT
WANTS CATALOG
SPEC. CATALOG
OUR RESPONSIBILITY
DURABILITY
GOOD ARGUMENTS
GOOD ARGUMENTS
BUYS OF BROWN
OBJECTS TO TRUST
SHIPPING PRICES
GENL. PRODUCTION
GENL. PRODUCTION
GOOD CLOSERS
GOOD CLOSERS
FINAL PARAG.

Form XIII: A convenient paragraph book that can easily be made from a manila leaf scrap book. The indexes, cut with a pen knife, facilitate reference until, with practice, the desk man memorizes the page-paragraph numbers most used

to Know Price," "Asks About Terms," "Do We Prepay Shipment," "Do We Take Back Unsatisfactory Goods," etc. Now cut up your letters into paragraphs, and put all paragraphs of one kind into one pile.

By looking through these piles of paragraphs, it will be easy to see what paragraphs are dictated often enough to deserve a regular form paragraph. When you have gotten together a complete list of the form paragraphs needed, you can then pick out from the paragraphs in the piles, the best one to answer each given question, polish it up and bring it up to the "masterpiece" standard.

Gridiron Signals That Win Points in the Game of Business

Perhaps you have gone into an office during dictation hours and have heard a correspondent reading off numbers to his stenographer as though he were a football quarter-back giving his signals. He picks up a letter and says, "twenty-eight, thirty-two, forty," and then passes on to the next letter.

This correspondent is simply using the paragraph system. For when our paragraphs are completed, they are put into a book and numbered, so that in specifying the paragraphs needed to answer a letter, we simply give our stenographer the numbers of them.

Secure a large scrap book with heavy manila pages, and wide, blank indexes. Or better still, get a book with no indexes and cut the indexes for yourself, with a pen-knife, so that they will look like the indexes shown in Form XIII.

Place on the first page—page one—the word "starts" and write this plainly on the index, as shown in the cut.

This page should contain all the good "beginnings" we have ever composed for starting off a letter, from the commonest "replying to yours of the tenth" to the most elaborate and original introductions.

Paste these paragraphs down on the first page numbering them 1-1, 1-2, 1-3, the first figure denoting the page and the second the number of the paragraph.

Take the second page and label it with the name of another class of paragraphs such as "generalities" pasting in all paragraphs on general facts about your goods.

Now go through the balance of the book, labeling each page with the name of a class of paragraphs, such as "terms," "prices," "don't like quality," "kicks on conditions," "wants special concessions," "is buying of competitor" "buys cheaper elsewhere," and all the other classifications suggested by your work.

As you paste a paragraph on a given page, be sure to number it both according to its location on the page, and the number of the page itself. The third paragraph on page eight, for example, should be numbered 8-3. Thus when you name this paragraph to your stenographer, she can turn to the paragraph at once.

In dictating, keep the paragraph book open before you on your desk. When you want to find a paragraph on the subject of say, "wants longer credit," just run your eye down the index and you can spot in a second or two the proper page. Turn to this page and select the desired paragraph.

Growing Familiar With the Form Book—System Gives Quantity and Quality

As you continue to use the paragraph book, both you and your stenographer will become thoroughly familiar

with all the paragraphs, and you can name off the numbers of the paragraphs needed to answer a given letter instantly, without referring to the book at all.

The results, both in quantity and quality of work, that a good paragraph system will accomplish in a correspondence department are almost beyond belief. With its use even the dullest correspondent can be made to produce letters that rank in brilliance and tone with those of the star advertising writer. Moreover, there is no varying of your correspondence with your moods. You can growl out the numbers of the paragraphs or laugh them out, but the customers will still get the same paragraphs. You may feel dull or bright, sluggish or alert, it matters not to your correspondence, for you answer it with paragraphs that are always the same, always your best, always the strongest argument, or the smoothest diplomacy that could be composed through hours of previous thought and study to handle the case in point.

From the standpoint of time and labor-saving features it does not need much explanation to show that the paragraph system will provide innumerable advantages for both correspondent and stenographer. One man with the paragraph system and three stenographers, has been known to handle more work than three men and four stenographers working on the same class of correspondence without "the automatic correspondent" to aid them.

It means cheaper salaries, for ordinary typists instead of stenographers can just as easily handle the paragraph system. It means better and neater typewritten work, for the copy is made from clear typewritten copy instead of from uncertain notes. And it means more

leisure for the correspondent himself—often total freedom from the monotonous drudgery of dictation.

Repetition, the Locust Swarm That Kills Budding Ideas, That Blights Intellects

Repetition—repetition—repetition! It dulls minds and it blights intellects—it is monotony incarnate. The only thing that interests the human mind is the thing that moves and changes. The paragraph system will eliminate the most tiresome kind of repetition work in business—the incessant repeating of the same facts and paragraphs over and over, *ad infinitum*.

The Mind's Eye

IMAGINATION is the eye of the mind, the power that calls up pictures of things not yet present, ideas not yet realized, perfection not yet attained. Imagination precedes and is the cause of all achievement. The sculptor sees his finished statue in the block of marble before he sets a chisel to the stone. The painter's completed picture glows in his mind before he lifts a brush.

So with all human achievement. First the picture in the mind—then the realization. Get clearly before your mental eye the business organization you want to build. Then rear it by that plan.

Part V

SHORT CUTS THAT WILL SAVE TIME

Use the Minutes

WE all have the same sixty minutes, the same twenty-four hours, to work with; and the man who achieves the greatest success is the man who knows how to work with this period best—how to get the most out of it. Time-economizing is more important than money-economizing, for the right use of time is the price of every earthly accomplishment and reward.

To the scientist, time is literally the measure of achievement. His treasury of years has a limit; his work, unfinished, will pass on to another, who will receive the reward.

To the business man, time is capital. He can borrow a million in money—he cannot borrow, beg, steal or create a minute.

Money, art, comfort, inventions that save hours for thousands, discoveries that lengthen lives by decades—all depend upon time. Use the Minutes.

CHAPTER XVI

Making the Most of Minutes

TALK about the extravagance of the inebriated sailor! If the newly landed, newly paid middy tossed about his earnings, as the average office man does his time, his wages wouldn't last him through the first half-block after getting into port.

The commonest spendthrift in business is the spendthrift of time; the man to whom each day is a period to get through with, somehow, some way, with the least possible amount of bothersome thought and effort.

Every office has its retinue of these time-killers; competent men who let their competence go for nought because they do not utilize it through every working hour. You see them in the president's chair and you see them in the workshop; energy-profligates, who have formulated deep-seated, unconquerable habits of ease, of complacency, of self satisfaction, of laziness and inertia, of doing short things by the long way, until the flight of time to them, is as much a matter of unconcern as the flight of the "Twentieth Century Limited" is to the passing telegraph poles.

This chapter isn't meant for this sort of time-waster —the man who deliberately squanders time, does not

spend it in studying ways for improving its use. But it is for the more common class of time-users —for you and me, and even the most systematic of us who are, perhaps, unknowing and unwitting losers of golden minutes

Boiling Down the Day's Time—Watching Golden Minutes Slip By

All of us, from the general manager down, are time-wasters in some form or other. We waste time in getting down to work, and we waste time in getting back from it. We waste time in doing things, and we waste still more in talking about them. We waste time in worrying about the things we have done, and more often still in worrying about the things we haven't done. From morning until night, from office head to office boy, we are occasional time-burners—wasting time in talking and thinking, in getting out of bed, and in getting back again.

The fact of the matter is, we are human, and we can not work through any day without some exhibition of the frailties of humanness. When we have accomplished things, we must call in the world or our private secretary to preen and boast about them. When we have failed in these same things, we must sulk and brood until we have caught our second wind and are ready to try again. And more than all else, we must talk. For we are a talking race; and most of the talkers are in business.

The common consumers of time, however, are the leaks we do not realize, the weaknesses that are unconscious, the little errors in thought and in action that eat into our energy and tax our results almost without our knowledge.

Nearly every office has a number of these unconscious time-losing weaknesses.

The time wasted by working with the right hand solely, when we should school and utilize the left; by keeping our working tools in inaccessible and awkward places when they should be at our fingers' ends; by devoting high salaried energy to low salaried work, when we should hire a cheap clerk to help us out; these are the office man's unseen leaks that eat into his cost of effort, just as surely as factory wastes do into manufacturer's cost of production. And these are the "insidious losses" that this chapter is written to overcome.

Hoarding Time and Systematizing the Office Hours—Producing Efficiency

The right hand man to the president of a great eastern concern, recently said, "If the young man in the office who wants to grow with the business, and grow fast, will start today to systematize his time, he can accomplish more in the next month than he could in a year of ordinary experience."

"Systematize your time;" that is the first essential in saving time. And the best way to systematize time is to take an inventory of it, to find out where every minute of it goes, and what it brings back, to classify your use of it day by day and week by week, and identify the uses that are profitable and the wastes that are not.

Study for a fortnight the number of minutes lost in each working day—by needless delays, by superfluous conversation, by meaningless effort, by unnecessary red tape. Seek out the cause of each faulty hour—and eliminate it. Discover the reason for each purposeless

minute —and extinguish it. Watch not only your office conduct, but your out-of-office conduct —watch for the outside indiscretions and diversions that affect your working ability, your clearness of thought, your mental alertness.

Many men lose time and impair effort by working overtime and sacrificing rest. Night work rarely pays. The man who gets eight solid hours of sleep is likely to do twice as much work in the eight hours that follow as the man who works twelve hours and sleeps four.

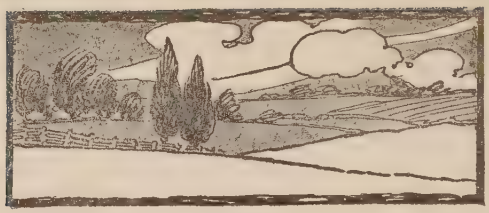
These are generalities perhaps, but they are vital generalities, and necessary generalities, if the office man is determined to keep account of and utilize every second as though it were gold.

Rest While You Rest

DON'T take your business anxieties to bed with you. When you lie down to rest, let your business rest also. You cannot master the business of that day which follows a night of restless worry.

Men often say that they have lost more than one night's sleep over some business problem. Yet they were less able to handle affairs the following day than they would have been after a night of peaceful sleep.

Let your desk system be your memory overnight; leave your business worries there; don't take them to bed.



CHAPTER XVII

Short Cuts That Beat the Office Clock

WHEN the office man has mastered the generalities and perfected a definite "day's work" plan, like that worked out in previous chapters, here are a few short cuts and suggestions for getting 'cross lots in the day's routine and saving many common sources of wasted effort. They are applicable to the work of manager or clerk. Study them, and use them.

DON'T rely on your "trusty right hand" altogether. He who refuses to let the left hand know what the right is doing, is losing a mighty valuable aid. The left hand should be schooled to do the work of the right, to sign your name, to make out tickler slips, to O. K. vouchers, and handle things about the desk with right-handed facility, accuracy and speed. It should be a right-hand understudy, and then if that member should become temporarily injured or disabled, your work can go on as usual. Furthermore, and for obvious reasons, the man who can work both hands at once, is usually a much faster and better worker than the one-handed man.

DON'T go through the tiresome, needless formality of dictating the full name and address and pedigree of each correspondent whose letter you answer.

It is on his letter—your stenographer can read it as well as you. Number each letter, and dictate simply the number. And in dictating—don't forget to make liberal use of the paragraph system wherever possible. It saves your time and it saves your stenographer's time, and insures a better letter to your correspondent in the bargain.

DON'T scatter your working tools through a dozen different drawers and cupboards about the office. Have a definite place for each class of tools right within your own desk, within arm's reach—keep them there and only there. This little plan in itself will eliminate hours and hours of lost motion and wasted effort in the year's work.

DON'T mistake activity for productivity, and motion for deeds. It is easy to be busy doing nothing, and some fast workers are slow-achievers. The aim of the office man should be to accomplish every task with just as little action and drain on his faculties as possible. The man who has to move his chair a dozen times in an hour in order to get into a desk drawer for needed material may be an energetic worker but he is a poor desk manager and most of his energy is liable to be used in profitless action. Let him arrange his working material so he does not have to turn his desk and himself upside down to get at it.

DON'T jump into each day's work, as a blind man might jump in the dark, with no definite knowledge of where you are going to land or what you are going to do. Have your work planned out definitely the night before, with each duty, due for accomplishment, itemized, and the hour stated when it needs attention. Follow a definitely laid-out program and see that every min-

ute is made to conform to that program. The man who does things as they turn up, is constantly turned down.

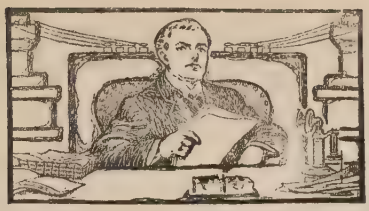
DON'T waste time in starting and in quitting work. The first half hour should be the most productive of all eight. Use it—and use it from the minute you land at the desk. Work—and work through to the closing hour. Don't begin ten minutes late and knock off ten minutes early. Make the first and the last hours of the day the most prolific—the rest of the day will take care of itself.

DON'T ponder and hesitate in dictating. Rapid speech stimulates thought. Careful deliberation over each word diffuses thought and breaks continuity. Have what you want to say clearly in mind, and say it —quickly, vigorously, plainly.

DON'T invite visitors to the office, or take up personal matters during the office day. It not only wastes your company's time, but it takes your mind off your work. And the mind is like a locomotive,—once fully started and on a smooth track, it moves ahead almost of its own momentum; but off the track, it's hard to get back again. In business hours, keep the mind moving, and the dollars will keep coming.

The Little Flaws

YOU—and your competitor—have seen the big leaks at the desk, in the store, about the factory. They are stopped. The advantage lies with him who first caulks the little seams. Which one of you shall it be?



CHAPTER XVIII

Little Schemes for Saving Time

WHY that diagonal path across the corner lot? Because it is nearer. Short cuts are the order of the day; they are the secrets of industrial success; the origins of dividends. That the shortest distance between two points is a straight line, any youth can prove, but many men have failed to apply it to their business. It doesn't follow that a man is lazy because he takes the diagonal path—he sees a short cut and takes it. Why tramp around two sides of a square when you can speed down the diagonal?

Be a short-cut convert, but don't become rabid. Don't apply the rule to the detriment of efficiency. Here are a dozen sane, practical cuts that are saving business men money seven days a week. Their application is not copyrighted. They are yours for the taking.

Tricks with Filing Cards—Shorthand That Reads Itself

It is frequently necessary to keep several kinds of records in one card tray. To distinguish them it is customary to use cards of different colors. A more simple way is to mark with ink the tops of the cards. One set

can have the tops marked with red ink, another set with black ink, another can have red or black dots along the top. This renders each set quite distinct. This is particularly useful if cards have to be transferred from one set to another, for then no fresh card need be made out—it is only necessary to re-ink the tops.

To get certain information from the cards without taking them from the tray, or reading what is written on them, notches can be cut in their top edges. When they are in place, rule along the tops, from front to back lines at certain intervals.

Each of these lines produces on each card a dot, so that each card has on it a number of dots at equal distances apart. Now notches can be cut at any one of these dots to denote a certain thing.

For instance, supposing the cards were a register of insurance policies, on which the premiums are paid annually. Each dot can represent a year, and as soon as the premium is paid the date and amount are entered on the card, which is then notched for that year.

As soon as all the premiums are paid, the notches form a groove along the top of the cards, from back to front of the tray. If any premiums are not paid, the fact is at once perfectly obvious, as the unnotched cards show up plainly.

Finishing up Your Mail at a Single Reading—Using the Blue Pencil

Most men read their mail twice—once to get an idea of "what it's all about," and how pressing is the demand caused by it, and again, deliberately, to attend to the demands in detail. These two objects may be reached by one reading.

Go through a letter with a blue pencil or a pen dipped in red ink. Underscore the significant words or phrases that indicate matters for attention. Write a word of disposition near each vital phrase.

When you dictate your replies you save the time otherwise spent in re-reading in detail and considering the letter before you. The gist of the correspondence has already been noted.

The Universal, Perpetual, Standing Joke—Where's the Blotter?

"Where's that blotter?"

Out of sight beneath the work on the desk, picked up and thrust in a pigeon-hole with other papers by mistake, or on the floor under your feet.

To avoid this inconvenience, get a light coiled spring about one-eighth of an inch in diameter and a foot long. Make a small loop on one end of the wire and attach a little spring clasp to the other. Fasten the loop with a thumb-tack to the top of the pigeon-hole case of your desk, so that the spring hangs down just in front of one of the vertical divisions. Put the blotter in the clasp, and you know where it is. In this way it is always at hand and in the same place; the spring allows the use of the blotter anywhere on the desk, and when you have used it, simply release it and it returns to place.

A Commonsense, Home-made Scheme for Classifying Index Cards Rapidly

In the circulation department of a publication, in a follow-up system, or in any work requiring the daily filing of many cards, a great saving of time will re-

sult from classifying these cards before the filing is begun. This is especially true when the file is large, filling many drawers. Then one drawer after another of the card catalogue can be pulled out, and the cards going into this drawer filed at once.

A little device which greatly facilitates this process can be made in a few minutes. Suppose the cards to be filed measure 4x6 inches. An ordinary sheet of strawboard, 28x40 inches, is marked off into squares. This will give each necessary letter of the alphabet a space large enough to allow a margin of an inch around the cards. A bunch of cards can then be taken, distributed alphabetically in the proper spaces, and quickly filed in the card cabinet. For complete encyclopedic indexing, the "A" cards, for instance, may be further arranged on the board into "AB," "AC," etc.

Data Always in Sight but Never in the Way—A Second Use for the Arm Rest

Some office men have occasion to refer often to a table or list of figures—cost figures, pattern figures, prices and discounts, or other data. How to have this information always in sight, yet not in the way has long been an enigma. Some business men paste these sheets on cards and tack them to a wall; some keep them loose on a desk—a scheme that involves confusion when the sheets are needed for reference.

To obviate this, a manager in one office took out the arm rest or slide on one side of his desk, reversed it, and had a small plate glass cut to fit in the space that is usually there. Under the glass he inserted the tables to which he made reference. This device did not impair the usefulness of the arm rest or slide for its

usual work, as the glass was as good to work upon as the varnished wood.

Personal Letters Filed in Your Desk—Vertical File for the Year's Letters

Of course you want your personal correspondence at your right hand—where you can get at it—in one file. Use the vertical file system and apply it to your deep desk drawer or to a convenient vertical file case.

A folder is used for each regular correspondent, and in this folder is filed all of the correspondence, including the carbon copies of your replies. Then when you wish to refer to any letter you have all the correspondence before you.

These folders are filed on edge in vertical files or in the deep desk drawer and may be arranged alphabetically or numerically. The alphabetical arrangement is best suited for a small volume of correspondence.

In many cases the correspondence is of such a nature that it will be more often referred to by subject than by the names of correspondents. In such cases, the correspondence is indexed by subjects. A guide card is used for each general subject and the folders containing correspondence relating to that general subject are arranged in front of that guide. A separate folder, appropriately labeled, is used for each subhead of the subject. A card system is used for each individual and on this are noted the dates of letters and the subject under which it is filed.

One drawer of a vertical file furnishes sufficient capacity for the ordinary personal correspondence. It has a capacity equal to from eight to ten flat sheet files.

The advantage is that you have all of the correspondence for a long period in one place, instead of scattered through numerous transfer cases.

A Short Cut for Clipping Items—One More Stenographic Symbol

To mark a magazine or newspaper article, don't fumble for your pencil or reach for your pen. Merely pinch a bit of paper off the top of the sheet over the column, a little to the left. This so effectively marks the paragraph or article that no matter where the paper or magazine may be tossed, the nipped edge will be noticed at a glance and often valuable time will be saved in looking for the desired information.

The short cut not only indicates what periodicals are to be saved for reference, but instantly locates the page and even the column of the desired item.

Keeping Note of Verbal Messages—A Filing System for Telephone Orders

Telephone messages received by business houses are often overlooked because no record is kept of them; and what is more, if the message delivered over the phone is attended to, no record is kept for future reference and complications often arise. Telephone orders, too, are the most prolific source of complaint and trouble for every house.

Realizing this, an English merchant devised a system of telephone notes which absolutely keeps track of all messages received and delivered over the telephone or all business done by the verbal method.

Every person in the office who does any telephoning has a pad of the telephone note slips (Form XIV). When-

ever he receives a message, he puts down the name of the person from whom the message is received, the time and date, and his own name. He writes in brief the contents of the message received and puts his reply on the reverse. The same thing, of course, is done when any individual in the office calls up an outsider on business of the company.

These slips are handled the same as correspondence, being filed in the letter files under the name of the outside firm.

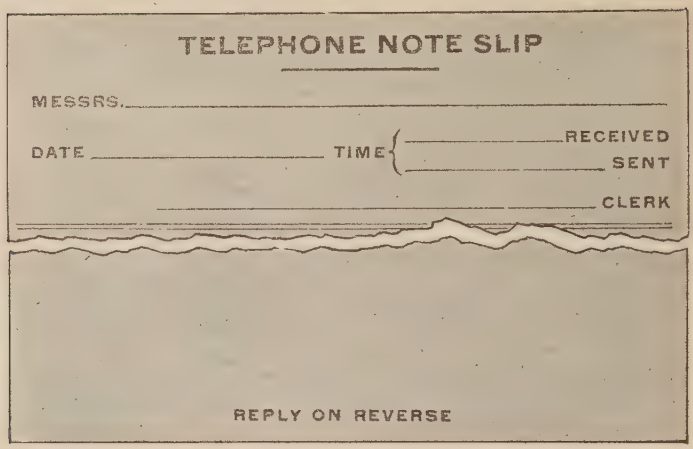
This system prevents the neglect of matters taken up over the telephone and preserves a record of business done through that medium.

A System for Handling Telegrams—Extra Copies for Mailing and Filing

Telegrams are usually despatched with more or less haste. There is not always time to send the message blank to be copied in a letter book; still a copy should always be kept of every telegram sent. Moreover, the message should be confirmed by mail, and to get the true wording of the message as given to the telegraph company it is necessary to have the letter book before you in writing or dictating your letter of confirmation.

A triplicate blank system for handling telegrams to obviate all difficulties enumerated is here described. It enables one to write the message on a telegram blank, make a second copy for the office record, and still a third copy to mail the correspondent (which in many cases saves writing a letter); all three copies are made at one writing with the use of but one carbon sheet.

This system consists of a series of three sheets: first a message sheet printed in the form of a regular tele-


TELEPHONE NOTE SLIP

MESSRS. _____

DATE _____ TIME { _____ RECEIVED / _____ SENT

_____ CLERK

REPLY ON REVERSE

Form XIV: Both economy and satisfaction have resulted from the use of this blank at the desk phone and in the letter file. The customer's phone number is recorded with his name.

gram blank; the second and middle sheet, the record sheet; the third and lower sheet, the confirmation sheet.

The message and confirmation sheets should be printed on telegraph manila and have binding margin at the left side, while the record sheet is of manifold tissue and transparent. By placing a piece of full carbon between the second (tissue) sheet and the lower (confirmation) sheet and writing upon the first (message) sheet you get three copies of your telegram with only one writing, in this manner: the message sheet is your original copy, the bottom sheet takes an impression from one side of the carbon paper, and the tissue sheet takes a reverse copy, but this tissue sheet being transparent, the copy shows through forward from the reverse side

These blanks are put up in pads for use in detachable covers of one hundred triplicate series to the pad, with blanks numbered consecutively in triplicate.

These pads may be put up in either of two forms. If the sender wishes to keep all his tissue copies together in one pad for reference and checking purposes, the blanks can be made up in the form of a wire stitched book, with the message sheet and confirmation sheet perforated about one inch from the binding edge, since they must be torn out to be sent away. This then leaves the tissue bound in the book. In this case, a few white sheets are bound into the front of the pad, alphabetically divided, to serve as an index. When the pad has been used up it can be taken out of the detachable cover, filed away, and a new pad will be inserted into the cover.

Should the sender wish to write his telegrams on a typewriter, a pad may be used wherein the blanks are merely blocked in threes. When writing a message, the typist tears off a triplicate set, inserts the tissue as before, sends out the message and confirmation sheet; and files the tissue on a post binder (for which purpose the sheets are punched with holes in the margin) indexing the message on the index sheets of the pad.

The principal advantages derived in using this system are that it prevents errors, as you have the exact copy of your message as sent to the telegraph office to mail your correspondent; this avoids disputes and acts as a safeguard in that the confirmation copy can be mailed and in many cases saves writing a letter. You are sure to get a copy of your message for your record, for you make it when you write your telegram. You have all your copies in pad form and you can easily refer to former messages. When your telegraph bill is presented you can easily check same as to number of words, dates, and so on. A record can be kept as to the time the telegram leaves your office and whether it went "Paid"

or "Collect," these records appearing on all three copies. Cipher translations also are noted on the office copy.

In an office where the vertical system of correspondence filing is used, it is usually desired to file copies of telegrams with the correspondence. In this case the pad described above can be used; the tissue, instead of being placed on a binder, can be filed direct in the correspondence files, without being entered on a pad index. Or, better still, the tissue can be placed on the binder until it has been checked against the telegraph company's bills and then filed.

A Folder Record for Advertising Contracts—Vertical File Checking Scheme

In "checking up" advertising it is convenient for the advertiser to have all the data applying to each contract separately analyzed and arranged for ready reference. This is easily accomplished by the use of a vertical-file folder designed to record all items relating to the copy, insertions and returns (Form XV). This blank will save money in showing unprofitable mediums.

The second leaf of the folder projects sufficiently to afford an index showing the name and address of each publication used and the contract number. On the inside of the first leaf is pasted a copy of the contract, while the first line of the first page of the folder gives the details of the contract at a glance. This arrangement combines a card record of data, with a file for receiving all clippings, proofs, rough "set ups" and special correspondence.

The card record on the first leaf has a section for noting all insertions; a line of thirty-one spaces for each month.

Each square records the number of lines or inches used under the date published; or where a uniform space is alloted to each issue the square is used for an "O. K." check.

Should the copy be keyed to trace direct inquiries, the name and address of correspondents can be recorded in proper columns arranged down the first leaf and continuing on the outside of the second leaf. A second record can be used for this purpose and inserted in the folder if desired.

A Ready File for Cost Quotations—Necessary Data in a Nut Shell

When a purchasing agent buys a large amount of goods from various houses, it is essential to have on file for quick reference a record of costs for different supplies. One man uses for this purpose a card system which has been of practical service in his office for some time.

These cards are arranged alphabetically according to the names of the articles. In this way all the prices for the same article are together and are easy of access for comparison. This is particularly useful when a salesman comes in and names a price. The quotations of all his competitors for comparison can be seen at a glance. In the wide column is a notation of the name of the article as it is known to the manufacturer.

For example: "Varnish, Reed Flowing Spec." An order made out in terms familiar to the concern which receives it will be filled with more speed and accuracy.

How many times is an order received reading: "Ten Bbls. Varnish, Same as Last." This makes the order clerk look up back charges, which takes time, and often

PUBLICATION	ADDRESS	CONTRACT NO.

DATE OF CONTRACT	BY WHOM MADE	AMOUNT	BEGIN	SPACE	TIMES	EXPIRES	TERMS OF PAYMENT	EXPENSE CHARGED TO	SIZE OF PAGE	WIDTH COL.

INSERTIONS

MONTH	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	TOTAL INSERTS	TOTAL LINES — INCHES	RATE	AMOUNT	REMARKS

REPLIES TRACEABLE TO THIS ADV.

DATE	NAME	ADDRESS	DATE	NAME	ADDRESS

Form XV: A form showing the exact returns to the advertiser from every publication he may use. These sheets may be filed in a loose-leaf book

he picks out the wrong "Last." Then comes a column showing the usual quantity purchased, which saves looking up previous orders or old invoices and prevents ordering too much or too little. Then come the discount terms and a notation to show whether delivered or not, Y standing for delivered and N. for F. O. B. works. Then follows the price.

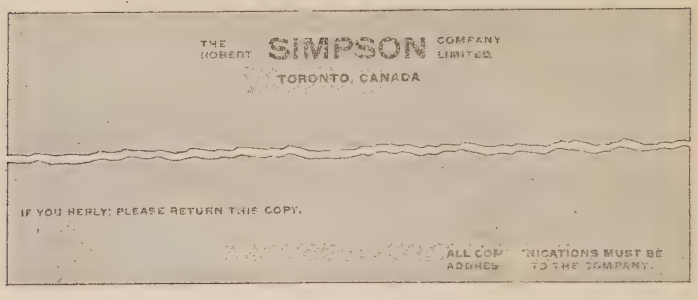
These cards are made the proper depth to fit in the top drawer of a desk. In keeping them in a drawer they are locked up at night and if they are to be referred to in the presence of a salesman it can be done without the salesman seeing other quotations.

A Time Saver for Foreign Correspondence—Receiving Your Own Letter

Even with the present time-saving correspondence methods, a reply to a letter received several days or weeks subsequent to the dispatch of the original necessitates some amount of time in reading the copy of the original on file or in the copy book.

Especially is this true of letters sent on long journeys to foreign countries where considerable time is involved in the transmission of the mails. The following system for refreshing the memory of any person who may have to wait some time before he receives a reply to his communication, is in use in the offices of a Toronto Company. It is found to meet the needs of foreign correspondence in every way.

When a letter is written to some distant foreign address, a tissue carbon copy bearing printed instruction for its return (Form XVI) is made along with the original letter. The copy is not for filing, but is mailed attached to the original letter. If the recipient of the


THE ROBERT SIMPSON COMPANY LIMITED
TORONTO, CANADA
IF YOU REPLY, PLEASE RETURN THIS COPY.
ALL COM NICATIONS MUST BE ADDRES TO THE COMPANY.

Form XVI: Showing sample carbon copy used in the correspondence of a Canadian manufacturing company. This copy is returned with the answer

letter replies, he sends back the carbon copy attached to his own answer so that when the writer of the original letter receives the latter communication, he has both his own letter and the reply before him, and need not trouble about having the copy in the files looked up, with the resulting delay.

In making this tissue carbon, little extra work is incurred, as the stenographer has only to insert it in the typewriter along with the regular copy.

Getting Full Value Out of Publications—A Subject Catalog for Magazines

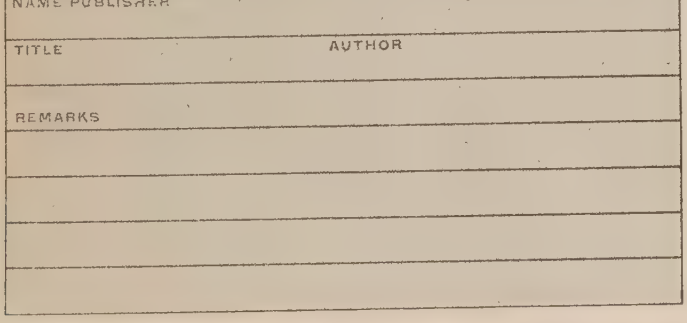
By properly indexing important articles in publications, the reader will derive real benefit from his reading. Moreover, he will find that the index takes little time, yet enables him to refer back immediately to every idea on every subject in which he is interested, that has appeared in the recent magazines. The extent of the index will depend upon the number of things in which the reader finds profit.

Here is a man whose interests were inclusive and covered a wide range of subjects. The alphabetical classifi-

cation of them is as follows: Accounts, advertising, billing, book-keeping, collections, correspondence, credits, employees, factory—manufacturing, investments, law, mail order, office detail, organization, purchasing, buying, retail, saving, selling—salesmen, shipping, stocking.

Every volume of the paper or magazine is preserved, being filed according to the date of issue. Each issue is read carefully upon its receipt. The vital parts of each article are marked either with underlining or by marginal markings, so that in referring back to the filed volume it is unnecessary to read the entire article through to locate the idea to which reference is made.

For purposes of reference one will prepare a card index (Form XVII) with cards 3x5 inches. The cards are filed alphabetically according to the list of subjects noted. On each card is recorded the general subject, name of magazine, date, page number and specific subject of the article.



Form XVII: This form of file card is a useful accessory to magazine and general reading. Data necessary to the purchase of the book is followed by a summary of the book's points

It is sometimes well to go even further and give a synopsis of the trend of the article and the conclusions reached in it, with whatever ideas of importance it may have suggested to you.

The filing is done by subjects and subheads. For instance, all cards referring to factory methods are filed together under "Factory." But these cards are again classified under "Costs," "Stockkeeping," "Equipment," and so on, in alphabetical order, with as much detail as is desired.

Simplifying the Tickler File—A Reminder for Sundays and Holidays

The tickler file where assorted memoranda are placed for attention on each day of the month, has guide cards numbered for each day from one to thirty-one. In filing subjects after these guides it is necessary to find out in advance what dates Sunday will fall on and avoid filing anything under these cards.

In order to simplify this process and make one calculation do for the entire month, I attach a paper clip to the guide for each Sunday or holiday and so avoid the necessity of adding up the days of the month. This is more satisfactory than taking the cards temporarily from the file as in most cases they will be lost or cause confusion; for the user, finding them absent, may forget that they represent a Sunday and be under the impression that he has lost some memoranda.

Real Business Helps and Hints That May be Had from Catalog Literature

Catalogs, as they are now prepared, constitute some of the most valuable literature of the business house.

The man at the desk, however, often thinks the mass of booklets a nuisance, for he does not know what to do with them. The spare drawers of his desk are soon crowded with catalogs which he is holding for reference and he looks for a place to file the surplus.

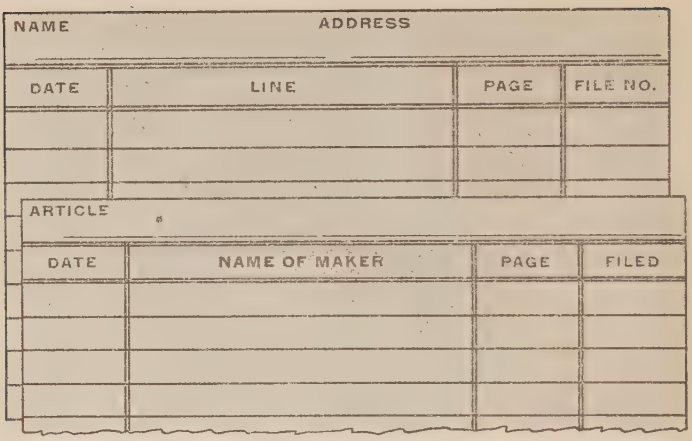
He wants to save the catalogs, and he wants them classified so that he can find them readily.

In filing and indexing these catalogs there are two problems to solve. In the first place no two catalogs are of the same size. If economy in space is any object —and it usually is—it will be impossible to file catalogs referring to the same articles together, because they will be of such various sizes.

It is therefore necessary to file the catalogs according to their size for economy in space. The second difficulty is in the indexing and here the only feasible method is to have a subject file and a name file.

A series of different sized vertical files arranged in one stack should be used for filing the catalogs. The stack may begin with the regular 10 by 11 catalog, which is a maximum size. Then there should be drawers gradually growing smaller until the pamphlet size is reached.

As catalogs come in they are filed in the drawer which fits their size. Each set of sizes is given a series of numbers beginning with A. Each catalog as it is placed in the file is given a number beginning with 1. This makes the system indefinitely expansible inasmuch as, if the catalogs outgrow a set of drawers, others can be added without interfering with the series number. The drawers of a certain size are always put in the same series number. As catalogs come in they are fitted to the proper drawer, which gives the series letter and their consecutive number in the file. Two cards are then



Form XVIII: File cards by which an index of catalogs may be kept both by firm name and by commodity, with whatever additional data may be useful

made out: one the name card (Form XVIII), which is indexed alphabetically according to the name of the article listed in the catalog.

The name card is made out to show the name and address of the manufacturer, the date of issue of the catalog (an important consideration), and the line of goods illustrated in the catalog. On the top of the catalog is placed the file number with a blue ring around it so it will catch the eye quickly.

The article card has the name of the article at the top and is filed according to it.

Newspaper clippings, scraps and advertisements are slipped into an envelope marked with the subject of which they treat, and placed with the smaller catalogs.

With this system the desk man can find where he can buy any line of goods. His file index will tell him just where the catalog is and the page on which is described the article in which he is interested.